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ABSTRACT

This report discusses a nationwide study of Adult Performance Level (APL) which involved sixteen projects in seven states and was conducted to (1) examine the University of Texas at Austin's APL study and describe the results and recommendations in terms of the adult needs in New York State; (2) examine several New York State Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs and to describe the intra-state variations; (3) examine selected APL materials and guidelines developed in other states to identify those aspects that should be considered as potential paths for New York State to pursue; and (4) design a set of models for incorporating an APL emphasis into existing New York State ABE programs. The body of this report is organized into the following five sections: (1) discussion of the generic background including a critical description of the APL study; (2) description and comparison of those curricula that reflect the findings of the APL study; (3) discussion which focuses on the integration of APL-type and ABE activities and emphasizes emerging credentially efforts; (4) presentation of an overview of staff development efforts; and (5) description of the more feasible of the alternatives that exist for the New York State Education Department when making policy decisions regarding future directions in adult literacy programs. The appendix comprises one-half of this report and includes site visit reports of the sixteen projects. (EM)

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FINAL REPORT
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NEW YORK STATE ADULT FUNCTIONAL LITERACY MODELS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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The program reported on herein was performed under Section 309, Title VI, Adult Education Act, P.L. 91-230.

FOREWORD

Of the many developments in adult education during the last twenty years, perhaps none has had the vast exposure over a short period of time as that of the competency-based, functional literacy thrust of the last three years. While the reasons are many and varied, the most cogent may be an awareness and acceptance by adult educators of needs heretofore not met in the traditional literacy education approaches.

Despite consensus regarding the limits of a "see Spot run" effort, it was not until the University of Texas at Austin's national research project that hard evidence was produced regarding the competencies adults needed to function in the several institutional phases of their lives. Rightfully, educators evidenced great interest, now had bases from which to operate, and proceeded to develop programmatic operations designed to accommodate assessed needs.

Prior to undertaking an expanded program within New York State, however, Dr. Mary Reiss, Director of the Division of Adult and Continuing Education of the State Education Department, elected to research the state-of-the-art regarding planned and implemented programs through a grant to the CASE Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education (IRDOE). The following reflects findings and conclusions of IRDOE, and should not be taken as a reflection of the State Education Department's position, nor that of the Division of Continuing Education.

Lee Cohen
Director, IRDOE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To acknowledge is to "recognize the rights, authority or status...," to "express gratitude or obligation and thanks." In these acknowledgements, too, there is a group of people without whom this study could not have been done. In particular, I want to thank the staff of IRDOE.

Linda Chitayat, Project Associate, who traveled with us in fact, while in spirit managed to supervise and coordinate the tabulations and cross-indexing that characterizes much of the content of this report. Not only did Ms. Chitayat act in the capacity of interviewer-observer on several site visits, but added new dimensions to the direction of this undertaking.

Russell Nutter, Project Administrator, traveled with us in spirit on planes and buses across the country. Without, in fact, leaving his desk, Mr. Nutter provided administrative, editorial, and production support--and prepared this report in its professional form.

Arnold Jaffe, Project Assistant, assumed primary responsibility for the content analyses, supervising the work of Harvey Shindelman and several other part-time assistants. Mr. Jaffe also helped us think through problems of interpretation, playing the devil's advocate, often and well.

Victor D'Lugin also played an important part. His insightfulness clarified our biases and his incisiveness our discursiveness. In addition, Mr. D'Lugin drafted several sections of this report.

After much consideration, I have decided not to include Ms. Chitayat, Mr. D'Lugin, or Mr. Jaffe as authors of this study, the reason being that the conclusions, inferences, and opinions must clearly be my responsibility. These opinions, moreover, do not reflect the position or policy of the New York State Department of Education's Division of Continuing Education nor those of IRDOE, CASE--although I had their continued support and encouragement.

IRDOE-CASE, in the persons of Dr. Lee Cohen and Dr. Max Weiner, permitted us the professional freedom to do this study. This is characteristic of their operations. At the same time, they made us aware of the controversial nature of our conclusions. I hope my position about APL--go forward, but go more careful -- is as clear to the reader as it is to Drs. Weiner and Cohen.

Other staff and consultants deserve mention. Ms. Sallie Blake, an observer-interviewer, shaped this report as much as any other person did. The research expertise of Dr. Rita Senf was of unique value. I would also like to thank Sonja Ikenson and Valentine Michielini, as well as the Institute's other professional staff who responded to my requests for help and advice with great enthusiasm.

The staff of the New York State Education Department's Division of Continuing Education was extremely encouraging. Dr. Mary Reiss and Ms. Lois Matheson permitted us much latitude. The interest and advice of Mr. John Hatfield, Project Monitor, and Mr. Bob Poczik, Conceptual Monitor, was unflagging. The Division should be commended for sponsoring this study, which we believe represents another first effort of its kind.

Barbara R. Heller

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NEW YORK STATE ADULT FUNCTIONAL LITERACY MODELS PROJECT

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

At the end of December 1975, the Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education's (IRDOE) proposal to conduct a study under Section 309, Adult Education Act, P.L. 91-230, was approved by the New York State Education Department's Division of Continuing Education. The "New York State Adult Functional Literacy Models" project, as it came to be known, was funded from January 1 through June 30, 1976.

The project described herein was the result of several modifications in the original proposal, representing the combined input of staff from the Division of Continuing Education and from the Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education. The study findings differ from the direction we anticipated, but accurately reflect "what we found out there"--the state of the art of adult functional literacy as practiced and talked about in the Spring of 1976.

"Talked about" is used advisedly. From October 29, 1975--when the U.S. Office of Education formally released the results of the University of Texas at Austin's four-year Adult Performance Level (APL) study--to January 1976, when the Division of Adult Education (USOE, HEW) released its Competency-Based Adult Education Report, literally thousands of words were used describing the study results and implications. During this period APL activities flourished: State Directors of Adult Education met to "discuss APL-related State and national planning and implementation efforts," the Texas APL study was extended, APL competency research was initiated, APL resources were produced and disseminated, the National APL Advisory Committee met, and national and local press conferences and speeches were made. In response, "as many as 37 (over two-thirds) of the States...made APL-related and competency based adult education a priority."[1]

Although New York State found itself in the forefront of this new movement with its Central New York State External High School Diploma Program and Adkins Life Skills Program, with the national emphasis on APL the New York State Education Department Division of Continuing Education evinced interest in APL-related activities elsewhere: In particular, the Division was concerned with such questions as which of the curricula or related materials developed by other States might be applicable in adult education settings in New York State? Which research findings of the University of Texas at Austin study have direct implications for the adult population in New York State? And which findings need clarification, or modification in interpretation to have applicability locally?

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[1] Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education Division of Adult Education. Competency-Based Adult Education Report, January 1976.

Objectives

To this end, the Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education, in conjunction with the New York State Education Department Division of Continuing Education, proposed a study of APL nationwide. This study had the following objectives:

- To examine the University of Texas at Austin's APL study and describe the results and recommendations in terms of the needs of adults in New York State;
- To examine several New York State Adult Basic Education programs, selected by the Division of Continuing Education as representative of the range of the State's range of programs, and to describe the intra-state variation in curriculum, instructional and management systems;
- To examine selected APL materials and guidelines developed in other States to identify those aspects that should be considered as potential paths for New York State to pursue;
- To design a set of models for incorporating an APL emphasis into existing New York State Adult Basic Education programs, including recommendations for curriculum design, intructional programs, and management systems.

The final form of these objectives were arrived at after much discussion and consultation. They represented a starting point, modified as time went on. For example, in the original proposal we set out to examine "all" APL materials and guidelines. The change to "selected" ones resulted from the duplication we experienced in the field and from the rapidly growing body of materials. In much the same manner, after a decision was made to forego examining New York State's internal Adult Basic Education program structure and to rely on the expert input of State Education Department personnel to provide this information, the last objective assumed a different form. Instead of, as initially planned, devising a detailed plan to implement aspects of APL into New York State's adult education program, we will present alternative recommendations which highlight the gaps, overlaps, and untested assumptions that permeate the current work in adult functional literacy.

Procedures

To provide the data for the descriptive analyses of the APL-type projects being conducted, the IRDOE project staff identified sources of information, collected the information, reviewed and made critical comparisons.

The first stage consisted of hiring staff, including consultants with expertise in research methodology, interviewing techniques, and specialties in content areas such as political science and careers and occupations. Starting with information about APL activities and functional literacy programs in the public domain, the staff searched the professional adult education literature, contacted the U.S. Office of Education, and met with individuals from the New York State Education Department, many of whom had familiarity with APL. During this initial phase, all people we came into contact with were helpful in suggesting additional new sources and references.

Materials were obtained through letters and telephone inquiry. Once a body of data was amassed, a series of meetings between project staff and New York State representatives commenced. These meetings had several purposes, not the least of which was to insure total State Education Department involvement. For IRDOE staff, the meetings served to clarify the distinguishing characteristics of the competency-based movement, the coping skills content of adult education, the new criteria for certifying proficient adults and secondary students, and the APL study findings and policy implications. As a result of these joint meetings, new directions were acted on.

The project's second phase consisted of field site visits. Between February 24 and May 26, 1976, IRDOE staff visited seven states (New York, New Jersey, Texas, Rhode Island, California, Oregon, and Missouri), and reported on 16 projects.[1]

Figure 1, on pp. 4-5, lists the dates and places visited, and the number of observer/interviewers. Information was collected at four additional adult education and/or APL-related project sites, and IRDOE staff (through a review of published materials) gained a working familiarity with approximately six more programs. The purpose of on-site visits and personal interviews with

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[1] Site visit reports can be found in Appendices A-P.

Figure 1

A Chronological List of Site Visits (1976), Including Number of Observer-Interviewers, Staff Interviewed, and Appendix Location of Report

Date, 1976	N Interviewers	Appendix	Agency and Program Name	Interviewee(s)
2-24	(2)	 A	Educational Testing Service, NJ Reading Activities Survey	Study Director and Associate
2-27	(2)	 B	World Education, Inc., NYS Project AIM	U.S. Program Representative
3-2	(3)	 C	Teachers College, NYS Adkins Life Skills Program	Project Director and Staff
3-3	(3)	 D E	N.J. State Education Dept., NJ MAECOM Adult High School The Roadway	Assistant Director, AE; Administrative Assistant, MAECOM; Acting Director, AE
3-8	(2)	 F	San Francisco State University, California Staff Development Project in Competency-Based ABE	Project Co-Directors
3-10	(2)	 G - -	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Oregon Region X AE Staff Development Experience-Based Career Education Tests of Functional Adult Literacy	Director, AE, NWREL; Staff Development Coordinator, Washington Research Staff
3-11	(2)	 H - I	Oregon Department of Education, Ore. Competency-Based AE Program Chemeketa Community College Adult Learning Center Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma	Coordinator, Instruction & Student Services; Curriculum Development Coordinator; Director, AE Learning Center
3-12	(2)	 -	Linn-Benton C.C., Albany, Ore. APL Awareness Workshop	Staff Development Coordinator; Workshop Participants
3-16	(2)	 J -	Providence ABE Program, RI Learning Activity Packages University of R.I.'s ABE Curriculum Development Program	 Director, ABE Program ABE State Administrator

Figure 1 (continued)

Date, 1976	N Interviewers	Appendix	Agency and Program Name	Interviewee(s)
3-22	(2)		University of Texas at Austin, TX	Project Director; Coordinator of H.S. Diploma Project; Coordinator of Curriculum Development
		K	The APL Study	
		L	APL Curriculum Development	
3-23	(2)		Texas Education Agency, Austin, TX	
		M	External High School Diploma Pilot Project	APL Project Director; TEA Representative
4-13 to 4-15	(2)		ABE Commission on AE Conference, Kansas City, MO	
		N	Just Around the Corner	Associate Producers; Utilization Specialist
		O	ABE/APL Teacher Competencies	Project Director
5-26, 27	(2)		Regional Learning Service, NYS	Project Director; Director of RLS; Assessors; Trainers; Developers
		P	Central N.Y. External High School Diploma	

program staff was intended to provide in-depth information prior to the publication of reports and documents, and to supplement the information that was publically available. This purpose was indeed fulfilled.

Prior to the initiation of the field phase, we identified the major programmatic efforts. From among the myriad of descriptive accounts of what was being done in the "37 States in which APL-related activities received highest priority," those that seemed furthest along in development, were most innovative, or represented unique approaches, were tentatively selected for visits. Written and telephone contacts were made, and field visits (spanning 4 months) were scheduled. These months were busy months for people involved in APL: There was a national meeting of State Directors in Dallas, Texas at the end of February; the University of Texas at Austin APL staff were presenting their findings at meetings around the country; state workshops were conducted in Regions IX and X in March and April; and a national conference on adult education was held in April.

IRDOE staff and consultants designed overall guidelines to structure the site visit interviews and observations. These guidelines were, of necessity, loosely structured to account for the anticipated diversity of activities. To the extent possible, the topics that were to be covered included a description of the materials, including secondary and/or related products; funding history; the underlying philosophy; the target group; the chronological sequence of development or implementation; program site(s); and the availability of evaluative data. These 16 site visit reports form the data base for the comparative examination of APL-related activities.

Each site visit was conducted by at least two, and in some instances three members of the IRDOE project staff. Although the project director assumed prime responsibility for conducting the interview, each staff person was responsible for making certain the agenda was completed and for taking his own notes. Each person's notes were transcribed as soon as possible after the visit, preferably at the end of the same day. At a later date, after we studied the available written materials, the sets of notes were reorganized and reviewed by all the interviewers and presented to the New York State Education Department in the form appended. In one or two instances, phone calls were made to resolve inconsistencies; thus, while we made every attempt to insure reliability with the interview technique and consensus in reporting what we heard, the reader should bear in mind that we cannot claim that what was reported in mid-April remains the same as what might be reported in mid-June.[1]

Concurrent with the field visits, we began the analysis and synthesis of all the information we had collected from reports and published documents, and from first-hand sources. Any methodology specific to the various comparisons and descriptions we made will be detailed in the appropriate section of this report.

The body of this report is organized as follows. The first section includes the generic background and a critical description of the Adult Performance Level study both in terms of the underlying rationale and the research and reporting methodology.

The second major section describes those curricula that reflect the findings of the APL study, and compares curricula development processes, designs, and structures and content.

The next section focuses on the integration of APL-type and ABE activities and emphasizes the new credentialling efforts that have emerged and become linked with adult literacy. In the fourth section, we will present an overview of staff development efforts.

The final section describes what, in our opinion, are the more feasible of the alternatives that exist as a basis for the New York State Education Department to begin to make policy decisions regarding the possible directions that might be considered in strengthening adult literacy programs.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

On August 19, 1970 the Director of the Division of Adult Education Programs of the U.S. Office of Education sent a memorandum to chief State school officers inviting proposals which would systematically define adult functional literacy. Effective June 1, 1971, the $175,000 grant was awarded to the Texas Education Agency which subcontracted the "major portion of the work to the University of Texas at Austin, Division of Extension." The Adult Performance Level (APL) project got underway in September 1971 when Norvell Northcutt was hired as project director. Four years and several contract periods later, the USOE issued an official release stating that "one out of five American adults lacks the skills and knowledges to function effectively in the basic day-to-day struggle to make a living and maintain a home and family."[1] The importance of this finding needs to be viewed in the historical framework of the literacy, competency, and social participation movement.

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[1] As an example, during an informal discussion with the Central New York State External High School Diploma staff at the end of May, we were informed of a model high school competency-based adult degree program in Oregon that had not been extant at the time of our visit during the second week of March.

Definitions of Literacy

With the focus on universal education, literacy had been defined and measured for several decades, and the statistics describing the number of people who could not read or write, or who had less than a certain level of formal education were readily available. During World War II, however, when the U.S. Army was faced with training men to understand instructions for conducting basic military functions and tasks, it coined the term "functional literacy," redefining literacy as the capability of those who could do so. A reading equivalent level, 5.0, became associated with this definition, which spread to those outside the armed services. Thereafter, a fifth grade reading equivalent came to distinguish that person who could engage in activities required for effective functioning in the community from one who could not effectively function.

The Right-to-Read program, initiated in the late 1960's, was designed to improve the literacy skills of the American population who either lacked these skills or were deficient in them. The Right-to-Read program eliminated the concept of grade equivalents from the definition, stressed the aspect of comprehension in social context, and reconsidered reading, writing, and computing as tools for adequate social functioning. While this definition was generally considered an improvement, it left ambiguous, according to Sharon,[2] the meaning of "adequate functioning." Unanswered are questions such as: "How do we know when one is functioning effectively or adequately? Is it not possible for an individual to function effectively without being able to read at all? Is there a minimum level of reading skill necessary for adequate functioning while a higher than minimum level is relatively unimportant?"[3]

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[1] HEW NEWS, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 10-29-75.

[2] Amiel T. Sharon, Reading Activities of American Adults, (Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, December 1972)

[3] Ibid.

Such questions helped focus attention on the social context: filling out driver's licenses, making bank loan applications, reading recipes, and so on. The work of Lou Harris and Sharon and Murphy[1] were efforts to describe (and measure) the social context, the daily life context in which (reading) skills are used. The APL study occurred in this arena: functional competency was conceived of as "the ability to use skills and knowledge needed for meeting the requirements of adult living."

Competency-Based Education

The competency-based movement had its roots in a rebellion against certification programs based on numbers of credits, professional judgment, and in-class time. Borrowing assumptions and techniques from licensing procedures in which the best predictor of performance on a task is the performance on a similar task, the competency-based movement attempted to base teacher-training programs on whatever specific competencies a teacher needs.

In theory, the question is one of relating teacher behaviors to student learning: Those behaviors that affect student learning in the desired direction are the "competencies." Unfortunately, much more attention has been paid to measuring whether a set of competencies can be taught and how they are to be demonstrated than has been afforded to the more basic questions of: What are the competencies themselves? Which ones are crucially related to the task to be performed? And how are they identified?

The supporters of the competency-based movement say, "Adopt it anyway, since it must be better than the present system." And it does have its merits: it has helped defuse the testing mystique since the examiner and examinee know the task in advance; it has emphasized the "doing" or demonstrating response mode; and it has focused attention on behaviorally stated goals and objectives.

The detractors of the competency-based movement say that if no one knows what competencies are important, what difference do these meritorious procedures make?[2] For example, in writing about competency-based teacher education, Merrow suggests that the basic flaw is the "lack of the proven relationship between teacher behavior and educational outcomes." He goes on to say that "the woods are full of researchers willing to identify the essential 100 or the critical 50 competencies, but how valid they are is another question." No one, according to Merrow has really solved the problems of the the competencies themselves. No one has, as yet, identified the essential (teacher training-related) set of skills, knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors that distinguish the competent from the not-quite-as-competent performer.

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[1] Richard T. Murphy, Adult Functional Reading Study (Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service, January 1975)

[2] John G. Merrow II, Politics of Competence: A Review of Competency-Based Teacher Education (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, NIE, 1975)

Since Northcutt and the APL project team set out to "specify the competencies which are functional to economic and educational success in today's society...,"[1] their research must meet the same standards of criticalness, proven relationship to desired outcomes, and essentiality.

Social Participation and Coping Skills

With the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 establishing the Adult Basic Education program, the climate of the times was such that there was much interest in remedying "the inequalities of educational disadvantage by offering persons 18 years of age and older the opportunity to develop reading, writing, language and arithmetic skills to enable them to obtain or retain employment and otherwise participate more fully as productive and responsible citizens."[2] Also, in the mid-1960's, as a result of the Great Society legislation, a large amount of Federal money became available for the urban poor, the economically and socially disadvantaged, and the development of community resources in urban areas. Some of this new legislation mandated "maximum feasible participation" of the citizenry in designing and developing, supervising the implementation of, and evaluating the Great Society programs. Thus, community residents, adults, were not merely expected to, but were mandated to participate in community affairs. According to the National Advisory Council on Adult Education,[3] although these programs "have served millions of Americans, millions more were excluded from participation [lacking the] basic educational skills necessary for participation...." The new money and new priorities assured the adult learner a permanent place in the educational structure.

Thus, by August 1970 when the U.S. Office of Education sent Requests for Proposals to define and measure functional literacy, the stage had been set for the direction it would follow: Not only were basic skills to be considered, but they were to be adult skills viewed in the context of dealing with daily life in the home, on the job, and in community affairs. The language of the competency-based movement was available, and the concept of demonstrating proficiency was to permeate the future.

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[1] The University of Texas at Austin, Division of Extension, Adult Functional Competency: A Summary, March 1975. (italics ours)

[2] National Advisory Council on Adult Education, An Historical Persepctive: The Adult Education Act 1964-1974, March 1976. (italics ours)

[3] Ibid.

THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL STUDY[1]

In this section we will describe the theory and conduct of the APL study and raise what, in our opinion, are critical questions concerning the methodology and rationale.

According to the Summary,[2] the primary objectives of the APL project were to "specify the competencies which are functional to economic and educational success in today's society and to develop devices for assessing those competencies of the adult population of the United States." Northcutt considered functional competency the ability to use skills and knowledge needed for meeting the requirements of adult living. The requirements for a definition for adult functional literacy or competency must include four "elements."[3] The four elements consist of: a set of adult needs, or requirements for adult living, the satisfaction of which is necessary for success in adult life; an analysis of the "academic" skills needed to satisfy these requirements or needs; a set of criteria for success in society; and a demonstrable relationship between the behavior and the success criteria. To provide the base information for these elements the APL project staff undertook three tasks during the first contract period (9-15-71 to 12-31-72). They defined a set of adult needs, identified a set of underlying "academic" skills, and "field validated" the adult performance requirements (or behaviors derived from needs).

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[1] As source data, see: The Adult Performance Level Study: A Research Project for the Development of Performance Levels from Pragmatic Adult Literacy Objectives, Adult Performance Level Project Staff, Division of Extension, The University of Texas at Austin, January 1973; and Adult Functional Competency: A Report to the Office of Education Dissemination Review Panel (no author, undated). This report was made available by the Program Officer, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, USOE.

We also used Adult Functional Competency: A Summary, Division of Extension, The University of Texas at Austin, March 1975. In addition, IRDOE staff visited the APL project staff in March 1976 (see Appendix K) and the information we obtained in this manner will be included as appropriate.

[2] Summary, op. cit., see p. 12, where the assessment instrument is also described as a "by-product of the research."

[3] APL Study, January 1973, op. cit.

Theory of Adult Functional Competency

In defining the set of adult needs, or the "basic requirements for adult living,"[1] Northcutt's team simultaneously pursued four lines of research: they reviewed the literature to "search for a way to categorize the needs of the undereducated and underemployed adult." They surveyed state and federal agencies and foundations, and conducted interviews with 49 individuals from 25 different state and federal agencies who "provided literature, studies, data, and comments...to help identify characteristics which distinguished the successful from the unsuccessful adult." They held a series of conferences on adult needs.[2] And lastly, they conducted a "series of semi-structured interviews with undereducated persons in the Austin area in order to gather some first-hand data on their felt needs."[3]

Having generated a set of adult needs, the APL staff delineated six General Knowledge Areas (GKA): Consumer Economics, Occupational Knowledge, Health, Government and Law, Community Resources, and Transportation.[4] According to Northcutt, the GKA's "may be considered as the content of adult literacy."[5] The data were reanalyzed to identify the skills involved. Four primary skills emerged: communications (reading, writing, speaking-listening-viewing); computation; problem-solving; and interpersonal relations. The GKA x Basic Skills matrix--in which the cells are composed of specific adult performance requirements--is the APL operational definition of functional literacy or the general theory of adult functional competency.[6]

The next stage involved the creation of adult performances which were characterized as being "adult life-situations in each area of need which required the adult to communicate, solve some problem, demonstrate some interpersonal relationship, or possess some bit of general knowledge."[7] The performance requirements were aggregated into general objectives keyed to the GKA's. (We will discuss the APL objectives in the section on curriculum.) To begin the process of assessing the competency of the adult population in the United States, criterion-referenced items or performance indicators were written and field-tested. This phase is called the Field Validation Study.

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[1] Summary, op. cit.

[2] No reference appears in any source document concerning the number or nature of participants at these conferences.

[3] No data is available reporting the number of Austin-area undereducates interviewed.

[4] Transportation, subsequently subsumed under Community Resources, was originally considered as a separate General Knowledge Area.

[5] Summary, op. cit.

[6] APL Study, January 1973, op. cit.

[7] Ibid.

Field Validation

Most of the 1973 Report describes the field validation. More information is presented about the outcomes than about the procedures. According to Northcutt, the purpose of the "information gathered during the field test stage was...to respecify objectives and to improve the quality of performance indicators."[1] Usually three "iterations" of testing and respecifying were "required to reach consensus regarding a given objective."

There were a total of 41 objectives--from a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 10 for each of the six GKA's.[2] Each objective had a set of "related tasks," which totalled 274. The procedure was to prepare test items (i.e., exercises) around the randomly selected tasks. As described by the APL project staff, "since the tasks are logically sequential within the topics tested, performance on the items [in an area] are representative of the entire area."[3]

Field testing took place in ABE Centers (some with vocational educational programs, others with WIN or WIN-CEP programs), and in correctional facilities in 30 States. All subjects were adult volunteers. Approximately 6,000 test packets were distributed. The tests were administered in one to four sittings, with the examiner reading all items and instructions--with the exception of items testing reading skills. To be included in the analysis, a participant had to complete a demographic form and at least half of "one of the four area tests."[4]

Four demographic considerations were used as criterion variables. Each variable was broken up into four levels. The first variable, occupational prestige, was based on NORC values which were available for only 28% of the entire sample.

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[1] Summary, op. cit.

[2] This total was obtained by the authors' count of the number mentioned in the 6 GKA sections of the 1973 Report. All later publications refer to a total of 65 APL objectives.

[3] Ibid.

[4] These areas were three skill areas and a fourth General Knowledge item section.

The four levels for the Weekly Income variable were: below $48; $48.01 to $79.20; $79.21 to $119.70; and $119.71 and up. Income data were available for 22% of the total sample.

The third variable, ABE level, was applicable to 75% of the total sample. The four levels (1 to 4) correspond to beginner, intermediate, advanced basic education, and GED preparation, respectively.

Only on the Number-of-Years-of-School variable was the entire sample of 4,015 adults accounted for. Like the other criterion variables, this one was divided into four levels: 0 to 4 years of school completed; 5 to 8 years; 9 to 12 years; and more than 12 years of school completed.[1] The data is presented separately for each of the 160 test items in terms of percentage of correct responses for each of the four levels of the four variables.[2]

In general, the analyses of the items indicate a positive relationship between the percentage of correct responses and the Educational and ABE variables, and a less dramatic relationship between response and Occupational Prestige or Income. Overall, the slopes for the percent correct responses are steeper for the first 2 criterion variables than for the latter; that is, more people at the higher ranges of the two educational variables (years of school, ABE status) get the response correct. As a matter of fact, it is particularly noteworthy that ABE level D's, GED preparation, do very respectably on all items, and often a greater proportion respond correctly than other groups in the sample, including Educational level D's (who have more than 12 years of formal education). See, for example, items GL-4, GL-1, CR-6, CE-2, and CE-6.[3]

The most plausible interpretation of the findings is that success on the field validation items is indeed best related to amount of traditional education. On the other hand, despite the large number of people tested, their representativeness as a sample of the national population needs examination. In the final section of the 1973 Report, the APL authors indicate a recognition for another testing cycle using a more representative sample, one which expands the upper ranges of the Income and Years-of-Education criteria variables.

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[1] In the Appendix of the 1973 Report, Northcutt has no level 4 (12 or more years of education) unless the 139 interviewees classified as "blank" under Number-of-Years-of-School had more than a high school education. This interpretation is unlikely since, in the instance of ABE level (which totals 4,011 interviewees), "blanks" and "non-ABE attenders are accounted for separately.

[2] The number responding to each item is not included, nor is the reader told how participants selecting the "I don't know" option are counted; are they considered in the analysis as "incorrect" responses or subtracted and not used in the calculations of percentages?

[3] APL Study, January 1973, op. cit.

As a first go-round, Northcutt indicates that the Field Validation achieved its goal of developing a criterion-referenced or behavioral definition of adult literacy skills "which contribute to survival and success in adult life."[1] The exercises or items met the test of non-triviality (that is, are judged as important to those who work with the undereducated and underemployed) and also positively correlate with various indicators of success.

National Assessment of Competency

The next step in the APL research process was to determine national levels of performance with regard to the objectives.[2]

ORC, Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey, was subcontracted to conduct the survey. They drew a representative sample of adults from the continental U.S., formatted and printed the personal interview schedules, and administered the interviews in the homes of the respondents. The interview survey consisted of a composite battery of items (with 64 scorable parts) used previously. The major difference between the ORC survey and earlier ones was that in the national assessment, all repondents were permitted to complete all items, rather than discontinuing the interview after a certain number of items had been answered incorrectly. Testing by ORC took place between October 7-26, 1974. There is no mention of the number of people in the master probability sample nor of the number of respondents completing the interview survey.[3]

The average length of the interview was 60 minutes. Interviewers read the questions which consisted of multiple choice questions, open-ended questions in which the respondent was asked to arrive at an answer, and tasks, e.g., writing a note to a teacher). Responses were recorded, scored, and machine processed. The final stage consisted of examining performance on an objective-by-objective basis, and describing the overall competency of the population in terms of three levels.

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[1] APL Study, January 1973, op. cit.

[2] USOE Report, op. cit.

[3] Ibid. This report states that "to date, five independent samples, each not less than 1500 people have been tested, for a total sample of 7500 adults." The USOE Report is however, undated.

These three levels--APL 1, APL 2, APL 3-- are competency profiles based on a conjoint index of income, education, and job status. The APL 1 describes the least competent adults whose competency is associated with an income at the poverty level or less, and who have eight years or fewer of education, and who are unemployed or unskilled. An APL 2, designated marginally competent, has more than poverty level income but no discretionary income, and has between 9 and 11 years of formal education, and has semi-skilled to upper-level blue collar and sales job status. An APL 3 is the most competent adult whose performance is associated with varying amounts of discretionary income, and who has at least completed high school, and has white collar or professional-managerial job status. How well an adult performs "predicts" his APL success level. That is, from the number of correct responses, one can estimate the associated income, education, and job status level.

Data is presented describing the proportion of adults who, on the basis of the national survey of functional competency, are APL 1's, APL 2's, and APL 3's. Presentations are available by General Knowledge Area and skills, and in terms of demographic variables such as education, family income, job status, age, sex, ethnicity, and region of the country. No data is presented describing how real-life APL 1's, 2's, and 3's perform on the exercises,

The APL study concludes that "approximately one-fifth of U.S. adults are 'functionally incompetent'...this level of incompetence (APL 1) ranges from 16% for writing to 33% for computation."[1] The GKA of conumer economics presents the greatest content area of difficulty, "almost 30% of the population falls into the lowest level (APL 1), while one-third of the population is categorized as APL 2. The highest proportion of proficient persons (most able to cope) is found in relation to community resources...followed by occupational knowledge."[2] When translated into numbers, one-third is 34.7

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Summary, op. cit.

million adult Americans. For the APL project staff the needs and their implications for the educational system are immediate and obvious. Before describing how the University of Texas at Austin APL staff and other groups responded, we will discuss the study.

Discussion

The major problem, as we see it, was whether the APL study was an attempt to generate competencies that are essential to survival, or competencies essential to success. Granted that adult functional competency or literacy can be approached in a number of ways, we contend there are important differences (methodological, pedagological, and philosophical) in whether adult functional competency is conceptualized as meaning skills and knowledge associated with success in contemporary society, or whether one means the essential minimal skills and knowledge required for survival in contemporary society.

If one selects the competencies-to-success relationship, one must attend to the appropriateness of the success indicators. In the APL study, these are income, job status, and amount of education. That an "aggregate index" of these indicators can be more easily constructed than, for example, a success index based on self-acutalization, happiness, and or job satisfaction may not be sufficient justification for doing so. While there seems to be little question that an individual's well-being is, in part, bound up with his economic opportunities, what is less clear is the relationship between the economic opportunities and education.

In the framework of the competencies-to-success concept, successful adults (defined in terms of income, education, and job status) should exhibit or demonstrate those selected competencies which should be absent in non-successful adults. In this instance, the research question is "what do successful adults know that non-successful adults do not know?"

Within the concept of competencies-for-survival, all adults should possess the competencies since they are viewed as required minimal essentials. If this were the focus, the question to be answered is "what should all adults know?"

The APL reports attempt it both ways. Thus, for example: "the results of these different lines of research was a taxonomy of 'areas of need' that is particularly appropriate for the undereducated adult."[1] Furthermore, "in order to be successful in our society, an adult must achieve a minimum level of competency (performance) within each of these areas."[2] The repetition of these themes--non-trivial objectives as deemed important by those who deal with unsuccessful adults, and objectives that must positively correlate with success[3]--permeates all published reports. Despite the use of the words "minimal competency," our interpretation of the APL work is that it is, in fact, most concerned with skills and knowledge that correlate with success.

Why do we believe the distinction is important? To our mind, there would be differences in how competencies are generated, in the research methodology that is employed, and in the purpose to which the results are put. If, for example, APL is conceived as minimal survival competencies, the major emphasis should be on delineating those competencies. The question is identical to that that exists in any competency-based program: have the essential competencies been identified? The adequacy of the "four lines of research" used in the APL study is questionable: not enough descriptive data is presented on the qualifications of the "experts," and the focus was on the needs of the undereducated.[4]

Furthermore, the testing phases have different purposes. After validating items to clarify ambiguities, and so on, all non-ambiguous items would be retained, and the relationship between performance on them and success indicators would not be relevant. The implication would be that anyone not able to demonstrate mastery of these items lacked some vital skills.

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[1] APL Study, January 1973, op. cit.

[2] Ibid.

[3] USOE Report, op. cit.

[4] The inadequacies may lie in the presentations (who, how many, and soon) rather than in the process of using expert judgment.

If, on the other hand, the task was to define competency as it is associated with success, then the methodology of the field validation phase becomes most important. Its purpose--to identify and validate a group of items (and by induction, content areas)--might best be fulfilled by selecting two groups of adults: those who are successful (income, and/or job status, and/or education) and those who are unsuccessful using the same variables. In our opinion, only those items answered correctly by almost all (at a minimum, 90%) of the successful group and answered incorrectly by almost all (90%) of the unsuccessful group should be retained. In other words, all items that do not discriminate between successful and nonsuccessful adults should be discarded as not critically associated with success.

Although Northcutt does not present correlations between competency on his measure and real-life success,[1] he does report some demographic results: 19% of college graduates, 34% of people earning at least $15,000, and 39% of those with professional-managerial jobs scored as incompetent or marginally competent.[2] His conclusions imply that they have a lot to learn! Another interpretation is that, for a variety of reasons some of which will be discussed below, the test was not adequate. If large proportions of successful people do not answer the items correctly, the relevancy of the items is questionable since the respondent is successful despite incorrect responses.

The positive relationship between the percentage of correct response and the APL success indicators led the APL staff to confirm the validity of their original taxonomy of objectives. We are hard pressed to think of any series of test items (involving basic reading, writing, or computational skills) that would not correlate with those same indicators. The data that we examined have not convinced us of the criticalness of the items and objectives, in terms of their relation either to success or survival.

There are three other concerns to be discussed. The first involves the administration of the interview survey, the second the item quality, and the third concern is with the value structure. (See curriculum, p. 41.)

In the administration of both the field validation and national assessment study the respondent was directed to answer the question; when appropriate, as in exercises testing computational skill, the respondent had recourse to paper and pencil. He was not, however, permitted to solve the test problem in other ways as, for example, by asking an appropriate someone or by using appropriate resource materials such as an encyclopedia. Many of the test exercises, or performance indicators as Northcutt prefers to call them, are clearly factual rather than operational or process questions. As an example, there is one item having to do with the number of senators and representatives in the Congress; the answer is information that is easily obtainable. Perhaps a better "test" of competency is not whether the adult knows that each State elects two senators and not that there is proportional representation in the House, but where to find the answer.

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[1] That is, in his published reports he does not tell the reader how people who in real life meet the conjoint success indicators actually perform on the test of Adult Functional Competency. These data are not inferable from the presentations that are available.

[2] Summary, op. cit.

Another question in the same GKA (Government and Law) concerns individual rights when arrested and detained. Northcutt writes: "A shocking 34% of the [national assessment] sample felt that police had the authority to detain a suspect for as long as a week without bringing charges against him [not recognizing] the illegality of the situation."[1] Because of the way the item and options are worded, there is no correct answer: "Under no circumstances" is not correct according to the Constitution of the United States which allows for the one exception if there is a state of martial law. This example is not meant to be lighthearted nor erudite: We include it as an illustration of two problems that are common to the items. First, as an example of poor item construction and/or second, of an elitist value system that suggests that most people need not know "the full story."

Let's examine another item and the findings included in the national assessment.[2] "Concerning the right to peaceful assembly, 12% of the sample felt that permission to have public meetings should not be given to certain kinds of groups; e.g., 'radicals' and 'troublemakers.'" Clearly, the wording of this item asks the respondent for an opinion rather than the constitutional guarantee; the proportion of "incorrect" responses may not be as surprising when interpreted in this manner.

A final example illustrative of the ambiguity that remained in the final version of the APL survey.[1] One question in the GKA of Consumer Economics asks the respondent "which of three boxes of cereal is the best buy :[2] El Grosso at 89¢ for 17 oz.; Soggy Woggies at 91¢ for 19 oz.; or Frasbee Oat at 93¢ for 18 oz." The answer scored as correct is Soggy Woggies "in the sense of lowest cost per ounce." "Best buy" from a nutritional point of view is obviously the Frasbee Oat brand, which apparently contains OATS.[3] These and similar items operationally define APL functional competency.

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[1] USOE Report, op. cit.

[2] Ibid. (italics ours)

In their conclusions,[4] the APL project indicates that is has demonstrated that a large proportion of adults does not demonstrate those competencies required of them. As logically following implications, he argues for curriculum change at the regular classroom level and in adult education settings. Thus, he states: "If it is true that a significant proportion of Americans does not possess important skills and competencies, it is patently wasteful of human and financial resources to wait until persons reach adulthood to begin to address those needs."[5] If he is implying that APL competencies are not--but should be--taught in regular school, this contradicts the single most dramatic result of the national assessment which clearly indicated that the more education, the greater likelihood the person scored at the highest level Thus, while 27% of those with 8-11 years scored as APL 3's, more than half (52%) of those who completed high school performed at APL level 3; approximately two-thirds (64%) of those with some college, and 80% of college graduates plus performing at the highest level.

The APL project staff suggest that "because the original focus of the APL project was the ABE system [the APL] competencies would become the core of objectives for ABE."[6] Writing in March 1975, they point out that "several major curricula developmental efforts are already underway." In the following section we will describe some of these curricula efforts.

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[1] A major purpose in a field validation is to improve the quality of items. In the final version of the APL survey, 39 of the 65 separate scorable items had not been changed.

[2] USOE Report, op. cit.

[3] And from an aesthetic point of view, El Grosso is remarkably unappetizing.

[4] USOE Report, op. cit.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

CURRICULUM

Part of the problem was that the APL research was initially designed to define adult functional competency and measure it. As a result, the APL taxonomy was frequently revised--6 General Knowledge Areas became 5, and Tasks, first expanded in number, were later replaced with a more elaborate design. Initially, the APL project had no plans to develop curriculum, yet the response of others was overwhelming.

As early as August 1973 (before the end of 1974 when the APL testing was completed), an institute was held in Alabama under the auspices of Auburn University. The express purpose of this institute was to produce "teaching approaching in modular form utilizing the findings of the [APL] study."[1] (Another institute was held in August 1974 for a "major revision in terms of the newly defined knowledge areas....") The "Just Around the Corner" series of Mississippi tapes[2] was also begun in 1973, "based on the University of Texas APL project [and covered] the APL tasks and objectives...." Similarly, as early as 1973-74, the Providence Rhode Island Adult Education Program was committed to incorporating the APL work into their curriculum efforts.

Moreover, many programs that have come to be identified with APL had their beginnings even before the University of Texas at Austin started their APL research. The Adkins Life Skills program can be dated from 1965; in 1972 World Education was asked to try out Project AIM in this country, a process they were using previously in underdeveloped third world countries; and also in about 1972 the seeds of the Central New York External High School Diploma program were being laid. Finally, the competency-based curriculum in the State of Oregon can be traced to a 1969 law mandating a new set of requirements for high school graduation--whether for high school age students or adults.

Despite the fact that these and other curricula ally themselves with the APL study, historically many had roots, and perhaps loyalties in other movements. The San Francisco State University Staff and Curriculum Development project and the Oregon curricular efforts are rooted in competency-based education, adding APL-type competencies. Still others stressed coping or survival skills. In general, these projects differ in the extent to which basic academic skills are interwoven in coping skills.

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[1] H. E. Frank and N. O. Parker, Adult Competency Instructional Guide, Auburn University Vocational and Adult Education Department and the Alabama State Department of Education, Adult Basic Education Division, 1976.

[2] See Appendix N.

In this section on curriculum, we will concentrate on those programmatic endeavors whose major thrust has been with curriculum--the APL, Auburn-Alabama, New Jersey's Roadway, Rhode Island's Learning Activity Packages, the Mississippi tapes, and a model curriculum produced to meet Oregon's new educational requirements. We will, however, refer to other programs, such as Project AIM, Adkins Life Skills, San Francisco State University's Staff Development program, and 2 credentialling projects (the Texas Education Agency's External High School Diploma and Ruth Nickse's Central New York High School Diploma). With the exception of the Auburn-Alabama curriculum project, site visits were made to each of the others; the information we used to describe, analyze, and compare these programs was obtained from both personal communications and an examination of those materials that were available at that time.[1]

Description of Available Curriculum Materials

At the time of the site visits, the projects' materials were in varying states of completeness, although each had created the structural design and selected those objectives to be dealt with. The reader should keep in mind that at the time we visited, much had been accomplished. There is every reason to believe that the time between those visits and the writing of this report was as productive an interval.

By March 1976 the APL curricular effort produced a "Scope and Sequence Chart" for each of the APL objectives[2] and 7 modules in Consumer Economics. These modules, in similar format, existed in draft form; the Summer 1976 was the target date for completion of the total 60 modules. In addition to these modules, the five vocabulary objectives--one for each GKA--would be the basis of an ESL curriculum. (See Appendix L.)

At the time of our visit, there were 78 completed Learning Activity Packages (second edition), produced by Providence, Rhode Island and available for distribution in May 1976. These Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) are mimeographed booklets--reminiscent of "workbooks"--containing teacher activities and resources, learner activities, and evaluative suggestions for the instructor. (See Appendix J.)

[1] See Appendices A-P.

[2] See page 27, Curricula Designs.

The Auburn-Alabama Curriculum Guide consists of two books for the classroom teacher. The revised edition was available in early 1976.

Only one (of an estimated 10 to 12) series, "the Employability Series," of the Adkins Life Skills program is complete.[1] It is currently being used in adult education centers, high schools, and prisons in several states. The Employability Series consists of 10 units and has a manual for the teacher ("Life Skills Educator"), videotaped stimuli, student booklets, worksheets, and activities. (See Appendix C.)

The New Jersey curriculum, "The Roadway," exists in draft form. During the Spring of 1976, "classroom packets" were to be field tested in adult education centers. The curricular design, similar to that of Auburn-Alabama, contains computational skills, sequenced and cross-referenced to the tasks. The New Jersey State Education Department plans to include communications skills. (See Appendix E.)

The Central New York Generalized Competencies and the performance indicators--as well as the Individualized Competencies--have been used to certify adult external high school graduates. While general guidelines and a list of competencies are available, the specific tasks and how they are assessed have restricted availability. (See Appendix P.)

Oregon, according to the Region X plan, will develop curricular materials during the Summer 1976. They are tentatively called "unipacks" and will all have a common format. They are to be created and used by classroom teachers. (See Appendix H.)

Project AIM had not, at the time of our site visit, started its activities in New York State. AIM, however, has "several hundred pieces of material" that have been developed by staff in other locales using a process similar to that that will take place in New York. The materials consist of a 4-page booklet--a cover picture and three pages of story. According to the project staff, the stories tend to fall into approximately 10 categories. (See Appendix B.)

Mississippi has 15 videotapes which are being distributed by Cambridge Book Company. All 15 are in Consumer Economics. A series is planned for each of the other four APL General Knowledge Areas. In addition to the tapes, they intend to design "Related Materials" (guides to using each program) and a "Utilization [or Staff Development] Component." (See Appendix N.)

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[1] Available for purchase from the Psychological Corporation.

By the summer of 1976, the San Francisco State University project staff will have available 21 or 22 instructional modules that reflect the APL objectives. These are "instructional guides" (as contrasted with lesson plans) and cover four General Knowledge Areas; Community Resources is not treated separately, but rather as a subset of the other areas. (See Appendix F.)

Curriculum Development Process

Each curriculum effort incorporates a philosophy and a design. Almost all projects are producing, or will be producing packaged materials. There seems to be two general patterns--with much overlap--governing the developmental process: one in which adult education practitioners create the materials and the other in which specialists (non-practitioners) do so.

To a large extent, the APL Scope and Sequence Charts' design, the basic curriculum structure, was created by the APL project team, although ABE teachers produced the intermediate and enabling objectives which serve to define the 65 broad APL objectives. ABE teachers were to develop the curricular modules, but the early experience with this process was not adequate; the 7 modules were created by the APL curriculum staff specialists. During the Summer of 1976, ABE teachers who have been using APL, will be trained to write the remaining modules.

The Mississippi tapes were based on input from 118 ABE teachers who decided what the adult learner needed and what the tapes should be like. The tapes themselves were executed by professionals under the supervision of the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television.

Similarly, the Central New York Adult High School Diploma program and the New Jersey curriculum had input from both practitioners and experts in others fields. A task force of adult education practitioners came up with the Adult High School Competencies and the project staff developed the performance indicators and tasks. In New Jersey a task force of adult educators--ABE directors, teachers and representatives from the State Education Department--drew up the curriculum guidelines. The creation of the classroom packets is under the supervision of the State's Five Resource Centers.

Other projects started at the local practitioner level, with expert review and modification to follow. In particular, 3 projects--San Francisco

State University, Project AIM, and Oregon--intend to have ABE teachers create materials in specially designed workshop settings. All have plans for central review.

The materials for two projects were developed almost entirely by non-practitioners. Specially hired staff wrote the Learning Activity Packages, while the Life Skills materials were developed by the Life Skills staff.

Curricula Designs

Although all projects purport to be relative to the APL study, there is great diversity in the type of materials being produced (from stimuli for use by the classroom teacher to workbook exercises for the adult learner), as in the process by which they are being created. In this and the following subsection, we will examine the degree of similarity in design and in content. Finally, we will return to some theoretical and empirical questions.

The APL Curriculum. The curriculum being developed by the APL staff at the University is derived from the 65 APL objectives and keyed to the 5 General Knowledge Areas (GKAs) or Goal Statements. To define the objectives, the staff first generated a list of tasks or "situation-specific requirements." Schematically, the earliest design (and the one adopted by both Auburn-Alabama and New Jersey State Education Department) consisted of a set of objectives, each with a series of tasks:

	(APL) GENERAL KNOWLEDGE AREAS OR GOALS (N=5)				
	OK[a]	H	G and L	CE	CR
APL Objectives (N=65)	OK1-OK10	H1-H13	GL1-GL6	CE1-CE20	CR1-CR16
↑	↑				
Tasks (N=355 or 357)	OK T1-T51	H T1-T100	G&L T1-T35(37)	T1-T115	T1-T54

[a] OK = Occupational Knowledge; H = Health; G and L = Government and Law; CE = Consumer Economics; CR = Community Resources.

Although the tasks were useful to "suggest classroom activities" and as topics for creating items for the field validation study, the tasks were replaced with a more elaborate mapping for each objective. These maps, called "Scope and Sequence Charts," consist of intermediate objectives and enabling objectives. In general, there is one intermediate objective for each of the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking-listening-viewing, computation, interpersonal relations, and problem-solving. For example, for an APL objective in Health, there is an intermediate objective relating to reading health material, computing in the Health area, and so on.

The intermediate objective is, in turn composed of a series of enabling objectives. (Northcutt indicated that the "enabling objectives are close to the older conception of tasks.") For each intermediate objective there may be one or a dozen enabling objectives. The enabling objectives are sequenced in difficulty; mastery of the enabling objectives are necessary for mastery of the intermediate objective. Mastery of intermediate objectives are necessary for mastery of an APL objective. A person able to perform the APL objectives is functionally competent.

By March 1976, the APL curriculum design consisted of:

	GKAs OR GOALS (N=5)				
	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR
APL Objectives (N=65)	10	13	6	20	16
Intermediate Objectives (N=310)	48	61	25	113	63
Enabling Objectives (N=1045)	145	221	105	418	156
				modules, N=7	

Note: These figures were obtained by count from the Scope and Sequence Charts.

Modules are being produced for each of the 65 APL objectives. By March 1976, 7 had been developed. For a more complete description of the APL modules, see the site visit report, Appendix L.

Auburn University-Alabama State Education Department Curriculum Model. Like that of Northcutt, the Auburn-Alabama curriculum design is hierarchical. For each of the 5 "Instructional Goals" (equivalent to APL GKAs), there are "Performance Objectives," which correspond structurally to the APL objectives. There are a total of 60 Performance Objectives, each of which is composed of "enabling objectives" or "Ts" (for tasks).

Each enabling objective has instructor activities, learner activities, and resources. In 1976 (the publication date of the revised Adult Competency Instructional Guides) the curriculum consisted of:

(Auburn-Alabama)	INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS (N=5)				
	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR
Performance Objectives (N=60)	9	10	7	19	15
Enabling Objectives, "Ts" (N=237)	10	51	27	101	48
	+	+	+	+	+

Instructor Activities + Learner Activities + Resources

New Jersey ABE Curriculum, "The Roadway." The New Jersey curriculum is patterned after that of Auburn-Alabama. There are 5 identical goal statements, defined by performance objectives. The performance objectives are made up of lower order statements, designated simply as "Ts." The "Ts" are structurally similar to Auburn-Alabama's enabling objectives. For each "T" there is (a draft of) instructor activities, learner activities, and resources. In addition, after analyzing and sequencing the computational skills covered in their adult basic education program, New Jersey cross-referenced them to the "Ts." They intend to do a similar analysis for reading skills. The New Jersey curriculum looks like:

(New Jersey)	GOALS (N=5)				
	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR
Performance Objectives (N=54)	9	10	7	17	11
↑					
T(s) (N=285)	53	60	36	94	42
	+	+	+	+	+

Computational Skills + Instructor Activities + Learner Activities + Resources

Providence, Rhode Island's Learning Activity Packages (LAPs). The LAPs are 77[1] separate workbooks, which taken in toto, form a curriculum for adult basic education. Each booklet responds to a stated "observed need" of ABE (in particular, ESL) students. A General Objective--a response to the need--is included. Although these General Objectives have been categorized by the LAP staff into the 5 APL GKAs, the LAPs are very different.

For each LAP, the General Objective is described by several Specific Objectives. For each Specific Objective there is a teaching strategy, resource material(s), and generally, a suggested evaluation procedure.

Using the developers' classification, the LAPs are distributed as follows:

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[1] One additional LAP is planned: "Housing for the Elderly."

(LAPs) NEEDS OBSERVED

AREA	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR
N of LAPs (N=77)	10	17	15	19*	16
General Objectives (N=78)	10	17	15	20	16
Specific Objectives (N=328)	37	75	71	77	68
	+	+	+	+	+

Teaching Strategy + Materials + Evaluation

*LAP #37, "Banking," contains two general objectives.

Oregon Field Test Adult High School Diploma Model. Although strictly speaking, this program is primarily a certification effort, the model for instruction has implications for curricular design. The competency-based new high school graduation requirements include 21 "units of credit," of which 11 are required and 10 elective. In addition, for graduation there are Required Competencies in three areas; the model we examined also included suggested performance indicators:

(Oregon) AREAS OF REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

Areas (N=3)	Personal Development:	Social Responsibility:	Career Development:
Subareas (N=12)	• Communication • Computation • Scientific & Technical Processes • Health	• Citizen-Community • Citizen-Environment • Citizen-Transportation • Citizen-as-Consumer	• Career Decisions • Job Prospecting • Job Skills • Job Preparations
Competencies (N=65)	33	23	9
Performance Indicators (N=160)	69	57	34

Texas Education Agency (TEA) External High School Diploma. This certification project, in addition to incorporating APL objectives (see Appendix M) and the APL curriculum, includes "APL Life Skills Generalized Competencies" and "Individualized Competencies." The Generalized Competencies are described as "activities [that] cross APL General Knowledge Areas...and all skill areas." There are 38 of these competencies, 34 of which are referenced to specific APL objectives; not all APL objectives are used. Diagrammatically, the Generalized Competencies look like:

(TEA)	APL LIFE SKILLS GENERALIZED COMPETENCIES					
	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR	Misc.[a]
APL Objectives (N=38)	6	7	6	8	7	4
Tasks (N=38)	6	7	6	8	7	4

Note: There is "one task" for each APL objective that is included.

[a] These are from the Central New York External High School Diploma Program.

Central New York External High School Diploma. There is no curriculum as such in this assessment-certification project. There are, however, a set of "Generalized Competencies" which all diploma candidates must demonstrate. (There are also "Individualized Competencies" which will not be discussed here. See, instead, Appendix P.) We are including the Generalized Competencies aspect of this project because of the presumed "overlap between these and the APL objectives [which] validates both sets."[1] There are Performance Indicators for each Generalized Competency. The project staff categorizes their competencies as follows:

(CNYEHSD) Life Skills:	Generalized Competencies (N=64)	Performance Indicators (N=69)*
Communication	9	2
Computation	17	6
Self-Awareness	11	19
Social Awareness	10	20
Consumer Awareness	5	7
Scientific Awareness	6	7
Occupational Awareness	6	8

*In different places, there are 17 performance indicators counted as either Performance Indicators or Generalized Competencies. We counted them as Competencies.

The schematic design on page 31 is an attempt to visually represent the various curricular designs. Without question it oversimplifies the details, but fairly accurately reflects the hierarchical relationships. In our comparison of content, structure cannot be totally ignored. What one system calls a higher-order objective may often be found in another system, but at a different point in the hierarchy. For example, at the highest level of goals there may be perfect consensus regarding the inclusion of occupational knowledge, health, government and law, consumer economics, and community

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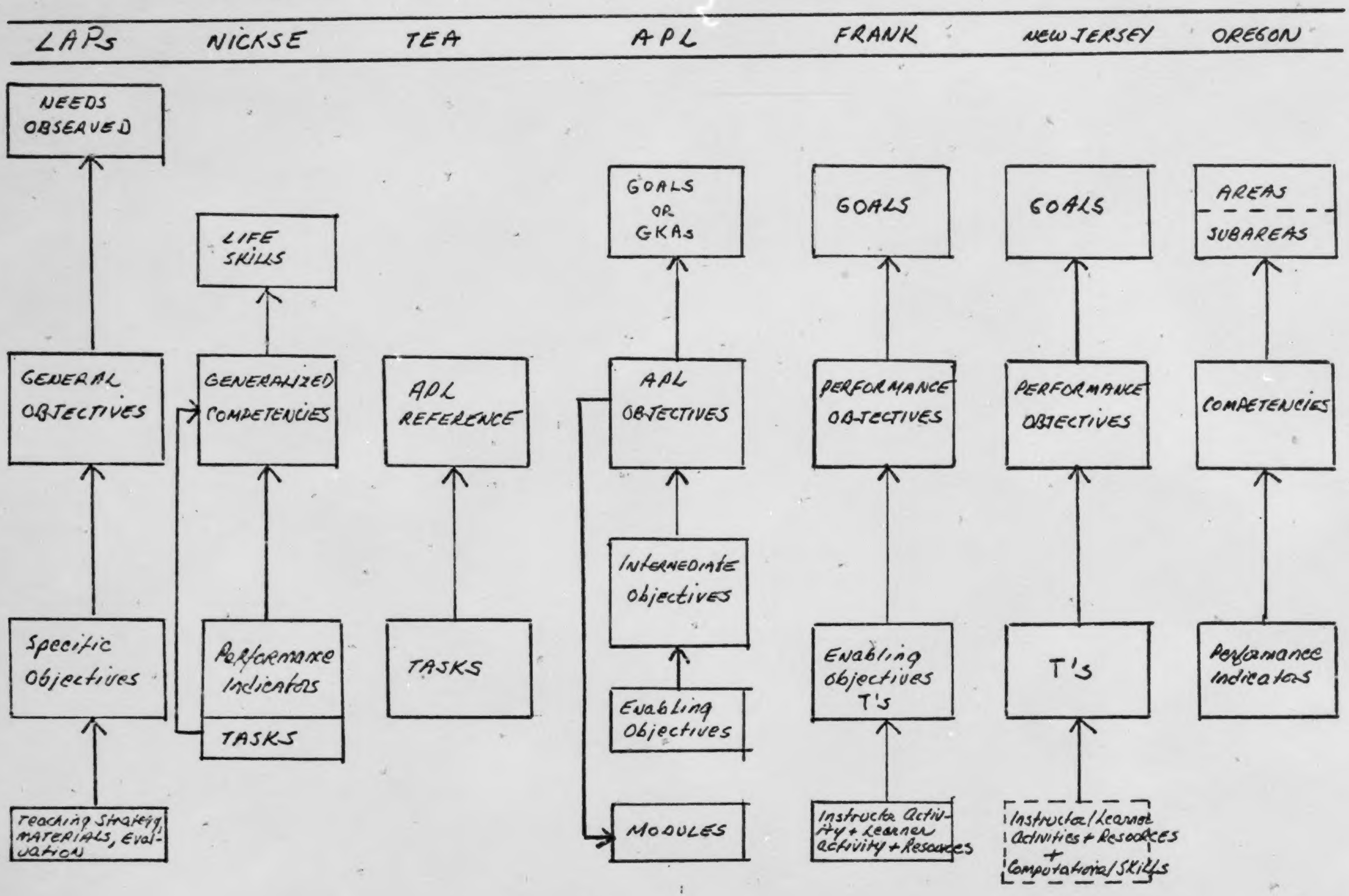
[1] See Appendix P.

Figure 2

A Schematic Representation of the Hierarchical Relationship Among Six Selected "Curricula" Designs


LAPs
NICKSE
TEA
APL
FRANK
NEW JERSEY
OREGON
NEEDS OBSERVED
GENERAL OBJECTIVES
Specific Objectives
Teaching Strategy, MATERIALS, Evaluation
LIFE SKILLS
GENERALIZED COMPETENCIES
Performance Indicators
TASKS
APL REFERENCE
TASKS
GOALS OR GKAs
APL OBJECTIVES
Intermediate Objectives
Enabling Objectives
MODULES
GOALS
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES
Enabling objectives T's
Instructor Activity + Learner activity + Resources
GOALS
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES
T's
Instructor/Learner Activities + Resources + Computational SKILLS
AREAS
SUBAREAS
COMPETENCIES
Performance Indicators

resources. The test for comparability of content is at the lower--defining--levels. To help the reader with the design and terminology, Figure 2 is drawn so that comparable curriculum levels occupy the same horizontal space.

Curriculum Content

Using the APL Scope and Sequence Charts we undertook a comparative analysis of the content of the Auburn-Alabama (hereafter, abbreviated as the Frank curriculum, after Harry E. Frank, Project Director); New Jersey's "The Roadway" (Jersey); Providence, Rhode Island's Learning Activity Packages (LAPs); the Life Skills Competencies of the Texas Education Agency's External High School Diploma Project (TEA); the Central New York Adult High School Diploma project (Nickse, after Ruth S. Nickse, Project Director); and the Model Adult High School Diploma project proposed by one group in Oregon (Oregon).

The purpose of this analysis was to ascertain the commonality of content. The rationale was that, with the possible exception of the Nickse program and the Oregon prototype model (both of which describe themselves as APL-related), all other projects state that they have adopted the results of the APL study: Thus, not only should they embrace the philosophy of APL functional competency, but the objectives as well. Consensus on the objectives and their behavioral definitions would, in our opinion, increase their validity. Lack of consensus suggests that despite the great strides made in redefining adult competencies, the essential components are not yet well enough delineated.

We proceeded as follows, using APL as the reference point. For each GKA we started at the highest order and determined the similarity (overlap) and differences in content between APL and each of the other curriculums. If they were not the same, we proceeded down the APL curriculum through the level of enabling objectives. The point of overlap (if any) was noted. Because of differences in wording that called for judgments, two people rated each statement; their differences were resolved by the project director. In general, when in doubt we judged the content as identical.

When two statements were identical in content they were rated the "same." Content was also rated "similar" to APL in instances where the same content was included but the activity differed. For example, a "similar" rating was applied to "list health hazards in the home" and "discuss health hazards in the home."

There were also instances in which two statements "partially" overlap. This judgment meant that they did not cover the same amount of material--the curriculum being compared with APL covered less. In those situations in which two statements overlapped in part, but the one being compared to APL contained more material, it was rated as "+ more."

The figures on pages 34 and 35 are examples of the analyses performed for each of the APL Objectives in the Scope and Sequence Charts.[1] These two objectives were selected to illustrate extremes: an objective on which there was a great degree of consensus and one which no other system felt was important enough to include in its curriculum, respectively.

From this comparison, we summarized the overlap in objectives for each GKA separately (see Tables 2-6), keeping intact the level at which the correspondence occurred. We also summarized the degree of overlap in total number of objectives (again by GKA) at the highest level only. This comparison is presented in Table 1, p. 36.

Table 1 allows the reader to consider the question of how many of the 65 APL objectives have been duplicated in 6 other projects at the highest hierarchical level, although it ignores the issue of correspondence at lower levels (i.e., the correspondence between an APL objective with, for example, a LAP specific objective).

As can be seen in the table, 57 of Frank's 60 Performance Objectives are APL objectives, as are 52 of New Jersey's 54. Only 17 LAPs match APL objectives. Of considerable interest is that, despite claims of virtual commonality, only 9 Nickse competencies (of a total of 19 that related to APL GKAs) duplicate APL objectives. If one examines Table 1 in terms of GKA, it is apparent that there is greater consensus in Consumer Economics than in the Health area.

Tables 2-6 present a more detailed analysis of the General Knowledge Areas from which one can identify specific APL objectives that have been adopted by others; it is also possible to note at which level in the system overlap occurs. Thus, in Table 2 for example, the only OK objective not

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[1] We had available the Scope and Sequence Charts for 60 APL objectives; the 5 objectives not included consist of a vocabulary objective for each GKA. Figures 3 and 4 are included as illustrative samples. The interested reader is invited to inspect the complete set of analyses at either the Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education or the New York State Education Department, Division of Continuing Education.

Figure 3

A Sample of the Basic Comparison Between an APL Objective (Objective H8) Selected to Illustrate Great Similarity with Other Major Curricula

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Northcutt APL, H-8

To understand what contributes to good mental health and to apply this understanding toward preventative care and health maintenance.

Frank	H-6 Performance Obj. (same)
Jersey	H-6 Performance Obj. (Frank)
LAP	None
Nickse	Competency IIIC
TEA	None
ORE	Competency 1.4.1, 1.4.3

Northcutt's Intermediate & Enabling Objectives vs. Others' Objectives

Intermed #1	Frank H-6 T-2 & H-6, T-1 (similar); Jersey H-6, T-1 & H-6, T-3 (same as Frank)
Intermed #2	-
Intermed #3	-
Intermed #4	-
Intermed #5	ORE 1.4.3.3 (similar)
SLV1	ORE 1.4.1.1 (similar)
R2	-
W2	-
R3	-
SLV3	Jersey H-6, T-4
PS3	-
IPR3	-
R4	TEA H-6 (partial)
SLV4	TEA H-6 (partial)
PS4	-
IPR4	-
R5	TEA CR-1 (Community Resources)
W5	-
SLV5	-
PS5	-
SLV6	-
SLV7	Nickse: Competency III C-3
PS7	-
R8	LAP 17 & 17.2 (+ more)
W8	-
SPLV8	-
PS8	-
W9	Jersey H-6, T-2; ORE 1.4.7 (partial)
SPLV9	LAP 21 (partial), Nickse III C2.1
PS9	-

Note that this APL objective and its defining components seem to have been accepted by four of the 6 other programs.

Figure 4

A Sample of the Basic Comparison Between an APL Objective (Objective H7) Selected to Illustrate an Instance of Complete Non-Acceptance by Other Major Curricula

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Northcutt APL, H-7

To understand the special health needs and concerns of the adolescent (and his parents) and to become acquainted with some ways to ease his transition from childhood into adulthood.

Frank	None
Jersey	None
LAP	None
Nickse	None
TEA	None
ORE	None

Northcutt's Intermediate & Enabling Objectives vs. Others' Objectives

5 Intermediate Objectives
18 Enabling Objectives) not matched by any other program

Table 1

A Comparison of Highest-Order Objectives in Six "Curricula" Programs With APL Objectives, By General Knowledge Area

Program Objectives	General Knowledge Areas (GKAs)					Total, All Areas
	OK	H	G&L	CE	CR	
APL Objectives	10	13	6	20	16	65
Frank's Performance Objectives, Total N	9	10	7	19	15	60
N = APL Objectives	9	9	6	18	15	57
N ≠ APL Objectives	0	1	1	1	0	3
N.J.'s Performance Objectives, Total N	9	10	7	17	11	54
N = APL Objectives	9	9	6	17	11	52
N ≠ APL Objectives	0	1	1	0	0	2
LAPs General Objectives, Total N	10	17	15	20[a]	16[b]	78
N = APL Objectives	0	5	0	9[c]	3	17
N ≠ APL Objectives	10	12	15	11	13	61
Oregon's Competencies, Total N	6	6	3	7	4	26[d]
N = APL Objectives	3	3	2	6	1	15
N ≠ APL Objectives	3	3	1	1	3	11
TEA's Generalized Competencies, Total N	6	7	6	8	7	34+[e]
N = APL Objectives	0	1	0	1[c]	1	3
N ≠ APL Objectives	6	6	6	7	6	31[f]
Nickse's Generalized Competencies, Total N	6	3	1	5	4	19+[g]
N = APL Objectives	1	1	0	5	2	9
N ≠ APL Objectives	5	2	1	0	2	10

[a] Includes two general objectives in the LAP booklet.

[b] Does not include a LAP to be written in this area.

[c] One of these is classified in APL as the Health GKA.

[d] Only 26 of the total of 65 Oregon Competencies are content-related; the remaining 39 include Competencies such as "computing," and in addition, topics (e.g., "Scientific and Technological Processes") which have no counterpart in APL.

[e] There are 38 Life Skills Competencies of which 34 are referenced to APL.

[f] Many of these have counterparts at the APL enabling objective level.

[g] Of the 64 Nickse Competencies, 5 were matched to APL enabling objectives and 40 (including, e.g., "computing decimals" and "awareness of art" were not appropriate to the APL GKAs, leaving 19 that could be so classified.

found in any other system at any level is OK10, "understanding the non-financial aspects of employment." What is not apparent in this and the following tables is a description of what is included in the Frank, Jersey, Oregon, TEA, and Nickse systems that is not in APL.

Table 2

A Summary Comparison of the APL Occupational Knowledge Objectives

APL (N=10)	Curricula (N Objectives)					
	Frank (N=9)	Jersey (N=9)	LAPs (N=10)	Oregon (N=6)	TEA (N=6)	Nickse (N=6)
OK1	OK1	OK1	-	-	-	-
OK2	OK2	OK2	-	3.2.2	-	-
OK3	OK3	OK3	-	-	-	-
OK4	OK4	OK4	-	3.1.1	-	-
OK5	OK5	OK5	-	-	-	-
OK6	OK6	OK6	-	3.2.1	-	VII, C.5
OK7	OK7	OK7	-	-	-	-
OK8	OK8	OK8	-	-	-	-
OK9	OK9	OK9	-	-	-	-
OK10	-	-	-	-	-	-

For example, especially in objectives OK2, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9, Frank has specific tasks that do not appear in APL. New Jersey, using the same 9 OK Performance Objectives and enabling objectives as Frank, has included 3 tasks that are not duplicated in either Frank or APL: writing help-wanted ads (OK2, T3); listing parts of standardized tests (OK4, T3); and using employment agency literature (OK5, T3).

The LAPs in Occupational Knowledge cover such topics as "Tools," "Unions," and "Carpentry." None of the 10 LAPs General Objectives classified as Occupational Knowledge duplicate APL objectives. Two LAPs, "finding a job" and "understanding your paycheck" match APL intermediate objectives.

Of the Oregon competencies, the three not reflected in the APL objectives are: planning a career-related educational program (3.1.3); job hazards and safety (3.3.2); and career readiness. In addition to the competencies, however, the 13 performance indicators (e.g., matching personal traits with appropriate occupations) have no analog in APL.

TEA has 6 occupationally referenced tasks, all of which correspond to APL enabling objectives. They are: collecting employment ads; writing for job applications or for an interview; comparing various job information sources; filling out a job application; discussing promotion requirements; and evaluating gross and net salary.

Of the 6 Nickse competencies in Occupational Knowledge, only "preparing a job application portfolio" (VII, C.5), is comparable to an APL objective. Another involving "making cost-benefit comparisons of similar jobs" (VII, C.3) is not reflected in APL; the remaining four match APL enabling objectives.

Table 3 summarizes similar information for the Health area. Like Table 2, included are the total number of objectives for the Health area in each system, and the overlap with APL. As can be seen in the table, Frank has a total of 10 Health objectives, 9 of which overlap the 13 in APL. APL H4 is duplicated by an enabling objective of Frank's.

Table 3

A Summary Comparison of APL Health Objectives

APL (N=13)	Curricula (N Objectives)					
	Frank (N=10)	Jersey (N=10)	LAPs (N=17)	Oregon (N=6)	TEA (N=7)	Nickse (N=3)
H1	H1	H1	-	-	-	-
H2	H3	H3	13	-	-	**
H3	H4	H4	16	-	-	-
H4	T6,H5	T6,H5	-	-	-	-
H5	-	-	-	-	-	-
H6	H5	H5	-	-	-	-
H7	-	-	-	-	-	-
H8	H6	H6	*	1.4.1;1.4.3	-	III, C
H9	H7	H7	-	-	-	-
H10	H8	H8	14	1.4.6	-	-
H11	H9	H9	18	-	CE6	-
H12	H10	H10	19	1.4.4	-	-
H13	-	-	-	-	-	-

*LAPs #17 and #21 match APL H8 enabling objectives.
**Performance Indicators only.

The performance objective that Frank added that has no counterpart in the APL concerns the need for clothing and shelter. In addition to a set of different objectives defining the Health GKA, Frank has several enabling objectives (e.g., immunization and child care agencies) which define similarly worded objectives differently.

In the Health GKA, there are virtually no differences in performance objectives and second-order objectives between Frank and New Jersey. Any differences lie in the more complete classroom activities available in Frank's Instructional Guides.

The 17 LAP General Objectives (included in booklets entitled, "Heart Attacks," "The Drugstore," "The Dentist," and "Personal Hygiene") have no analog in APL. Although 3 of Oregon's 6 Health-related competencies match APL objectives, 3 do not; one of these three is, however, similar to an APL enabling objective. Again, the more dramatic differences are at levels defining the objective statements. Further evidence is that several performance indicators do not appear in APL; these include such items as the impact of physical ailments on mental health (1.4.1.2); communicable and non-communicable disease (1.4.3.1); the physiology and benefits of exercise (1.4.7.1; 1.4.7.2); and the integration of exercise and job activities (1.4.7.3).

Of the total of 7 TEA Health-related Life Skills Competencies, three--the use of prescription medicine, the effect of the environment on self and others, and physical, mental, and emotional needs--are not reflected in the APL curriculum at any level.

As can be seen in Table 3, Nickse competencies are not heavily weighted in the Health area. Of 3 competencies, only the one dealing with preventive techniques, symptoms, and causes of major diseases partially overlaps one of the 13 APL Health objectives. Furthermore, the meaning of this competency may differ from the similar APL objective: some of the performance indicators for the competencies are not reflected at the APL intermediate or enabling objectives.[1]

Table 4 below summarizes the GKA of Government and Law. Again, to a large extent the Frank and New Jersey performance objectives in this area

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[1] The reader is again welcome to examine the basic comparisons--on an objective by objective level, by GKA--that are available at the Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education and at the New York State Education Department, Division of Continuing Education.

Table 4

A Summary Comparison of the APL Government and Law Objectives

APL (N=6)	Curricula (N Objectives)					
	Frank (N=7)	Jersey (N=7)	LAPs (N=15)	Oregon (N=3)	TEA (N=6)	Nickse (N=1)
GL1	GL1	GL1	-	-	-	-
GL2	GL3	GL3	-	2.1.2	-	-
GL3	GL2	GL2	-	-	-	-
GL4	GL4	GL4	-	2.1.1	-	-
GL5	GL5	GL5	-	-	-	-
GL6	GL7	GL7	-	-	-	-

overlap APL's, to the degree that all 6 APL GL objectives have been adopted; both Frank and New Jersey have added a Performance Objective concerning the government's relation to the economic activities of society. Both Frank and APL have second-order defining objectives which have no counterpart in one another's system.

New Jersey has adopted all of Frank's 7 Performance Objectives, and 10 of the 11 enabling objectives not in APL. They have 5 enabling objectives that have no counterpart in either Frank's or the APL curriculum. These include such topics as what constitutes breaking the law, the balance of power between business and government, and the rise and role of unions.

Not one of the 15 LAPs correspond to the GL objectives. Instead, they deal with very specific topics such as food stamps, small claims court, the post office, and making a will.

Two of Oregon's three competencies in the area of Government and Law overlap APL, while the third is treated in APL as an intermediate objective. In general, the agreement between Oregon's competencies and the APL content extends to the former's 10 performance indicators of which 9 have a place in APL. (The two exceptions are "tentants' rights" and "local elections.")

Such similarity is non-existent between the TEA competencies and the APL objectives. As can be seen in Table 4, none of the TEA Generalized Life Skills are reflected in APL, including understanding what constitutes a majority, serving on a jury, or visiting the police department.

Nickse has one competency--IV, 8 (exercising rights and responsibilities of citizenship)--and a number of performance indicators for it, but there is no match with any of the 6 APL objectives. There is, however, some similarity with the APL GL intermediate objectives.

Before presenting similar comparisons for Consumer Economics and Community Resources, we will present an analysis of the APL Government and Law area in an attempt to ascertain the value system in this section of the curriculum. Believing that "all national educational systems indoctrinate the coming generation with the basic outlooks and values of the political order,"[1] and that this "indoctrination" is not uniform,[2] a consultant to the project in political science examined APL.

The Government and Law area is intended to provide participants with the "knowledge which allows the individual to gain an understanding of society through government and law and which allows the individual to be aware of governmental functions, agencies, and regulations which define individual rights and obligations."[3] A review of the Scope and Sequence Charts indicates a "mechanistic" value orientation. Thus, government is presented in terms of institutions as defined by law--rather than as a political process by which people (using, perhaps, power and influence) resolve conflicts. APL presents "Government" as a set of institutions, interacting in a harmonious fashion, whose primary purpose is to allocate services.

Of the 105 enabling objectives, approximately two-thirds describe the legal functions and roles of various branches of state, city, and federal government. And only one objective involves the learner in identifying (by name and role) individuals in positions of authority. Less than 4% of the enabling objectives relate to individual citizen involvement in the political process--and these present his role as voter, campaigner, letter writer, and taxpayer.

The most striking example of the APL orientation is in the section dealing with taxation. Participants are to learn the correct way to complete an income tax return, which is followed by a presentation of the social services the government provides. By inference, a direct relationship between taxes and social services is presented, without mention of the other uses of tax revenue, graduated income tax, and the proportion of taxes levied (and actually paid) by various economic groups. One pays one's taxes and the money is returned in the form of social services. The section on contracts is treated similarly.

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[1] V. O. Key, Jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Knopf, 1961.

[2] E. Lett, Civic education, community norms, and political indoctrination, American Sociological Review, Vol. 28, No. 11, February 1963.

[3] Goal statement, G&L, Summary, op. cit.

In general, this GKA indoctrinates the adult with a fixed relationship whose purpose is the satisfaction of the basic needs of the citizenry. The concepts of individual power and influence are fleetingly treated, and politics is characterized as a passive activity within a harmonious system. The net effect is that people are being trained to act in a particular political way and to respond in a specific way to poltical phenomena. With groups whose political involvement is already low, this curriculum does not stress participation, nor encourage disagreement as a fact of life indigenous to our political system.

Table 5 summarizes the analysis of Consumer Economics objectives. As is apparent, Frank has a total of 19 objectives, not including CE20, dealing with world consumption of resources. The overlap with APL is not as great as would appear, primarily because of the differences in the defining, or second-order, statements. Frank includes approximately 20 enabling objectives (that cluster around APL CE6, CE12, CE13, CE17, and CE19) that describe the performance objective similarity in ways that differ from APL.

Similarly, the bigger differences between New Jersey and APL are in the lower-order defining tasks. In this instance, New Jersey has 15 tasks not reflected in the content of APL's intermediate or enabling objectives.

In this area, LAPs duplicate APL objectives. Eight of the 20 LAPs are similar. The others--such as "utility bills," "electrical applicances," "clothing," and "saving money" are not similar. There are, moreover, 12 Specific Objectives in the LAPs which have no analog in APL at any level.

In the area of Consumer Economics, 6 of Oregon's 7 competencies and all their performance indicators are reflected in APL. The one competency that is not concerns the "essential elements of a contract."

All of Nickse's competencies, and all but one of the performance indicators, correspond to the Consumer Economic content of APL.

Table 5

A Summary Comparison of APL Consumer Economics Objectives

APL (N=20)	Curricula (N Objectives)					
	Frank (N=19)	Jersey (N=17)	LAPs (N=20)	Oregon (N=7)	TEA* (N=8)	Nickse (N=5)
CE1	CE1	CE1	-	-	-	-
CE2	CE2	CE2	34	-	-	-
CE3	CE3	CE3	-	2.4.2	-	-
CE4	CE16**	CE16**	-	2.4.1	-	-
CE5	CE4,CE5	CE4,CE5	46	-	-	V, 2
CE6	CE6	CE6	-	-	-	-
CE7	CE7	CE7	33	-	-	V, 1
CE8	CE8	CE8	-	-	-	-
CE9	CE9	CE9	32	-	-	-
CE10	CE10	CE10	-	2.4.7	-	V, 3
CE11	CE11	CE11	-	-	-	-
CE12	CE12	CE12	-	-	-	-
CE13	CE13	CE13	-	-	-	-
CE14	CE14	CE14	67+Spec. Obj. 38	-	-	-
CE15	CE19	-	42	-	-	-
CE16	CE15	CE15	37	-	-	-
CE17	CE16**	CE16**	-	2.4.5	-	V, 5
CE18	CE17	CE17	63	2.4.3	-	-
CE19	T2,CE10	-	-	2.4.6	-	V, 4
CE20	-	-	-	-	-	-

*See Note c, Table 1.

**CE16 duplicates APL CE4 and APL CE17.

Table 6, the analysis of Community Resources, completes this comparison. This GKA now incorporates Transportation which had previously been treated as a separate GKA. There are a total of 16 APL objectives. Frank has adopted 15, excluding the one dealing with understanding driving regulations. He has, however, 11 enabling objectives which have no counterpart in APL. On the other hand, the reader should keep in mind that there are many APL intermediate and enabling objectives which have no analog in his system.

The New Jersey objectives in this GKA more closely resemble Frank than APL, although New Jersey has elected to adopt 4 fewer Performance Objectives.

Table 6

A Summary Comparison of APL Community Resources Objectives

APL (N=16)	Curricula (N Objectives)					
	Frank (N=15)	Jersey (N=11)	LAPs (N=16)	Oregon (N=4)	TEA (N=7)	Nickse (N=4)
CR1	CR1	CR1	-	-	-	-
CR2,3	CR2,3	CR2,3	-	-	-	IV, C.1
CR4	CR4	CR4	-	-	-	-
CR5	CR5	CR5	59	-	-	P.I. 1.2, IV
CR6	CR6	CR6	-	-	-	-
CR7	CR7	CR7	-	-	-	-
CR8	CR,ST1	CR8	-	-	-	-
CR9	CR,ST2	CR9	-	-	-	-
CR10,11	CR,ST3&4	CR10,11	61	-	-	-
CR12	T1,CR,ST5	-	65	2.3.7	CR3	IV, C.4
CR13	CR,ST6	-	-	-	-	-
CR14	CR,ST7	-	-	-	-	-
CR15	CR,ST8	-	-	-	-	-
CR16	-	-	-	-	-	-

New Jersey had added two tasks that are not dealt with at all by Frank or APL.

There are a total of 16 LAPs categorized as Community Resources, of which 3 are reflected in APL--going by bus; recreational areas; and using maps. LAP topics not dealt with in APL include: holidays; entertainment; restaurants; newspapers; fire department; weather; telephone; airports; extended care facilities; schools; libraries; adult learning centers; and dictionaries. In addition to General Objectives, the LAPs include 45 Specific Objectives not reflected in APL. A sample includes writing the date and the significance of major American holidays.

Although the Oregon model we used incorporates 4 competencies in Community Resources, only one is similar to an APL objective. Of their 6 performance indicators, the two dealing with libraries have no analog in APL.

The TEA Generalized Competencies in Community Resources lists 7 tasks, one of which is in the APL Scope and Sequence Charts. Those not comparable include getting a library card and several that relate to artistic and recreational interests.

Of the four Nickse competencies, two have counterparts at the APL objective level, and the other two are reflected at lower APL levels. Nickse has 6 descriptive performance indicators, only one of which, however, is reflected in the APL curriculum.

Summary

Why spend so much effort in these analyses? First is that "everyone thinks they're doing it--APL." APL has caught the imagination of secondary and adult educators in the country. Every new program, and many programs that predated the APL study, is describing itself as APL-related.[1] We believed it important enough to investigate the actual, as contrasted with the propagandized, similarities. As a result of these comparisons, we must conclude that--despite the apparent similarity at the objectives level--since their defining aspects, the lower-order statements, differ, the overall concept of adult functional competency differs significantly.

There is no negative value judgment attached to this conclusion: Although differences exist and should be noted, at this point in time diversity can only lead to better definitions of the essential elements of adult functional competency. What we have not attempted to answer, however, is the empirical question of how crucial these differences are.

The systems we examined appear more alike in their allegiance to the concept of applying basic skills to the content of everyday adult experiences than they are alike in content, philosophy, or the manner in which basic skills and adult content are integrated.

For the most part, these "APL-related" projects have as a common theme the importance of functional competency as a primary objective of adult education. The shared rationale is that the adult needs these skills to effectively interact with the social, economic, and psychological environments of contemporary society. These competencies will assist the individual (or will be required of him) for self-actualization and/or economic advancement. Thus, to a greater or lesser extent, these systems view the acquisition of functional skills in terms of extrinsic values such as economic and social success.

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[1] See, for example: USOE, Division of Adult Education, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, Adult Performance Level Related Educational Products Developed by Section 309 Special Projects, October 1975.

They differ from one another, however, in how direct they imply the relationship to be. At one extreme, the APL project seems to imply a direct relationship (not necessarily causal) between the acquisition (or presence) of these skills and social-economic "betterment." On the other hand, the Adkins Life Skills approach posits a less direct relationship. For Adkins, the acquisition of coping skills seems to represent an intermediate stage which, if successfully accomplished, would enable the adult to take better advantage of other educational training opportunities. For Adkins, it is the incapability of availing oneself of these other opportunities that decreases the individual's chances to actualize his goals for a better life.

It is a fact of educational life and literature that formal education is positively correlated with economic success: the more education, the greater the likelihood for higher income and higher job status. The APL study does not contradict this relationship. Rather, that study suggests that they have (in some sense) isolated the essential aspects of the educational side of the correlation and that these essential aspects are the APL functional competencies.

The second question the content comparison raises but does not answer is whether a new, complete curriculum is needed to teach functional competency, or are there not alternatives. For example, will not increased attention to basic academic skills (especially problem-solving skills) lead to the same outcomes? This issue has yet to be tested. All the projects described in this report are producing curricular materials that (among other things) seek to structure and formalize functional competencies. The manner in which they are doing so differs as a result of how the relationship between functional (coping, survival) skills and academic skills is perceived.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

We will examine this relationship as it fits into the adult education framework. From the data that is available (describing the target population and how "APL" is implemented), we will be able to describe alternatives to integrating "APL" into multiple program adult education centers, and their implications for staff development.

Target Population

Adult Basic Education spans a wide range of ability; it may also include adults for whom English is a Second Language and adults who are preparing to take the GED. The projects we looked at differ in terms of target groups--the people in ABE for whom the curriculum activity was intended. They cover the range of adults from ESL to GED.

The APL curriculum extends over the widest range. The five vocabulary objectives will form, according to Northcutt,[1] the ESL curriculum. Although neither lower nor upper levels are specified, the minimal level for participation in the APL curriculum requires "some limited sight vocabulary, plus some ability to add, subtract, and multiply."[2] The upper level--competency equivalent to that of an APL 3--is inferable as high school equivalent since the TEA is awarding an external high school diploma to APL 3's (who demonstrate selected other competencies as well).[3]

The APL entry prerequisites are among the lowest, with the possible exception of the Mississippi tapes intended for "adults with less than 3 years of education, but useful for all ABE participants."[4] Since the tapes are primarily motivational in intent, the issue of difficulty or requisite prior skills is not relevant.

According to the project director of the San Francisco State University project, their staff development process produces curriculum modules "geared to ABE levels 2 and 3--4.0 grade equivalent entry level." No upper range was specified, but she indicated that ESL was not a target group. New Jersey's curriculum is directed at "ABE students, but not those in ESL," according to a State Education Department representative.

While the AIM process of practitioner-created materials could be used to develop ability levels, most of the materials that currently exist "are directed to adult learners with a 4.0-6.0 reading level."[5]

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[1] Personal communication, see Appendix L.

[2] *Ibid*. When pressed, Northcutt conceded that an adult with a 2.0 grade equivalent could be considered the minimal level participant.

[3] It should be noted, however, that those Generalized Life Skills competencies tend not to be equivalent to APL objectives, but rather to certain intermediate or enabling parts of objectives.

[4] See Appendix N.

[5] Personal communication, see Appendix B .

Based on review of written materials, the Auburn-Alabama (Frank) curriculum guide states no entry minimum, but includes tasks "above that which would be acceptable to some adult groups; therefore such ['Advanced Tasks'] were included...so that instructors might choose from them if appropriate for particular groups."[1]

Although the LAPs were originally conceived as a vehicle for meeting the coping needs of adults in ESL, they are considered appropriate for all adults in an adult learning center with one exception: The director of the Providence Adult Education program expressed a strong opinion that the LAPs or any other APL-related curriculum would be inappropriate for those preparing to take the GED since, she felt, the APL skills are not congruent with the GED demands.[2]

The Adkins project is designed for adult education students at the seventh grade level and above, including those preparing for the GED. The Adkins program, however, was not intended to supplant ABE-GED instruction, but rather to supplement it. The manner in which it is implemented in the New York and New Jersey sites fosters the distinction between this project's goals and the goals of ABE instruction.

Different target groups raise, again, two issues that have been noted several times in this report: the relationship between functional and basic academic skills; and whether the functional skills are facilitative of, or essential to, success. If, for example, functional skills are viewed as distinct from academic skills, they can be included in various ways in the adult education program; if they are viewed as commingled they must be built into the program in a different manner. When the issue of certification is introduced (see below, pp. 52ff), the options for implementation narrow.

Although ranges of target groups have been identified by those groups responsible for the curricular activities, to the best of our knowledge no one has, as yet, tested crucial questions. Granted that "Dick and Jane" primers are not under consideration, how complete a curriculum is necessary to enable an adult learner to write a check or find the shortest distance from his home to a health emergency treatment center? Where, moreover, is the data that describes how adults learn? Will they improve basic skills as a result of progressing through the APL Scope and Sequence Charts; or will they improve their basic skills as a result of traditional instructional methods, including practice and reinforcement?

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[1] Adult Competency Instructional Guides, *op. cit.*

[2] Personal communication, see Appendix J.

There is no research evidence, for example, that addresses the question of what level of reading or of computation is necessary to master (or even begin) functional skills: Such evidence would be extremely helpful in knowing at what point in an ABE program these skills could be introduced. Similarly, little evidence exists with regard to how long it takes individuals starting at varying ability levels to master these competencies: answers to this question would enable planners to estimate the optimal duration of functional skills training and the number of instructional hours needed to achieve that goal. And finally, there is not yet enough data to suggest the potential advantages and disadvantages of teaching functional and basic skills together or separately.

Effectuating "APL" in ABE Programs

Until such time as more information becomes available, the programmatic relationship between ABE and APL activities must, of necessity, remain flexible. Of the possibilities for combination, three arrangements appear most feasible--infused, parallel, or supplementary implementation. Each assumes a slightly different rationale.

Infused Implementation. This approach calls for the creation of a single curriculum which combines both APL (i.e., functional, coping, survival) and ABE (i.e., basic academic skills) concerns. That new curriculum would consist of a single set of goals and activities, and would integrate the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of both APL and ABE indistinguishably. This approach assumes complete pedagogical harmony. Infusion is best represented by the APL curriculum as it appears to be implemented in the TEA External High School Diploma program.

We assume that the Auburn-Alabama and the New Jersey implementation plans are for curriculum infusion, as will be the case in Oregon. (We will discuss Oreg n in more detail under credentialling, since all adult education in Oregon is under the jurisdiction of the community colleges, and all participants in their program are potential candidates for a high school diploma.) Of the three--APL, Frank, and New Jersey--New Jersey's curriculum stresses basic skills to a greater extent and in a different manner. Their intent is to tie "Life Skills to literacy." In the New Jersey curriculum, in the GKA of Government and Law, as an example, the learner is expected to interpret graphs (tax-related) and to compute percentages (voting-related). In contrast, in the APL curriculum, the computational objectives include comparing costs (of legal aid and government services); recognizing numerical symbols and amounts of money; and "understanding problems in converting fractions to percentages...." This is an example illustrative of the possible variation in an infused implementation approach, reflecting different emphases toward basic skills. Thus, while APL may contain quantitatively more computational activities, qualitatively they appear to emphasize "comparing," "recognizing," and "understanding."

Parallel Implementation. The parallel implementation approach calls for two separate curricula, one addressed to APL and the other to academic skills. Assuming a basic skills curriculum exists, a curriculum to meet APL concerns must be formulated. Both curricula can be implemented as separate programs in an adult education center. Adult can participate in either or both these programs, at different times or simultaneously. With this approach it is possible to offer APL as either required or optional. The Adkins Life Skills Program is the only clear instance of parallel implementation we have noted. Adkins feels quite strongly that the Life Skills program be completely independent--it, in fact, requires specially trained personnel to conduct--of basic skills instruction. The same adult can, and in most sites does, participate in both.

To some extent, however, the Mississippi tape series and the AIM materials are parallel activities, if not parallel curricula. They can be used alone or as a whole series, in a parallel structure to ABE or as a supplement to it, but the intent is that the adult learner be sufficiently motivated to seek basic skills help needed to cope with everyday problems. While neither of these projects "teaches skills," both indicate that they are designed to lead to interest in skills development.

The advantages of two parallel curricula include the fact that, when compared with the infused approach, parallel curricula are more amenable to change and require much less of a commitment to a single taxonomy. They also offer adult learners greater choice and flexibility. On the other hand, once the developmental work is complete, parallel implementation will be more costly to maintain; will require more instructor hours and differential selection and training; and may result in increased competition for participants.

Supplementary Implementation. The supplementary approach is similar to the parallel model, differing primarily in the type of materials developed for teaching APL-type skills. Rather than a complete and sequential curriculum, supplementary implementation calls for the creation of mini-module units organized by APL-type task, topic, or experience. These mini-units would be available to the ABE teacher to use as appropriate with individuals or whole classes. They could be designed most flexibly, as motivational packages, as drill or practice materials, or for self-instruction. Mini-module units, for each topic, could vary in difficulty and along other dimensions to meet the needs of individual learners.

The supplementary implementation approach offers the most flexibility at the least expense, since it presupposes that APL-type competencies can be "taught" as discrete pieces--thereby negating the development of a complete curriculum. The pieces could be easily replaced, updated, and evaluated, and staff (re)training is minimal.

As a prototype example, the LAPs are illustrative of the curricular materials that might easily be used to supplement the basic skills curriculum. The AIM process for materials development, combined with a LAP-type format design, suggests a possible strategy by which APL-type activities may be integrated to supplement the ABE programs.

There is very little information, at this relatively early stage in APL history, describing how the new curricula will be or have been introduced[1] into adult education settings. What data exists is sketchy. For example, although the LAPs have been widely disseminated outside Rhode Island and to the adult education centers in Providence, there has been little monitoring of the extent of use or of how they are used in the classrooms. The New Jersey curriculum's "classroom packets" were to be distributed to ABE teachers in the Spring 1976 for a first field test; the focus of this field test will be on the quality and usefulness of the curricular materials, not on how they can be implemented. Oregon's future plans for the as yet unwritten "unipacks" involve having sets available in each adult education classroom so that any instructor (including part-time volunteers) can "pick one and conduct the session."

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[1] The major exceptions are the Adkins Life Skills program, and the two high school credentialling efforts.

One substantial source of information about implementation is the four projects that involve formal credentialling components: The Nickse Central New York External High School Diploma project, the TEA's External High School Diploma project, New Jersey's MAECOM Adult High School Program, and Oregon's Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma program.[1]

APL Certification and Adult Credentialling Efforts

These four programs fall into two broad categories. The programs in New Jersey and Oregon are responsive to revised State requirements for awarding high school diplomas, while the Nickse and TEA programs may be considered demonstrations of new models of high school certification, unrelated to their respective States' regulations.

Adult education in the State of Oregon is provided by the community colleges which offer a range of programs including ESL, ABE, GED, and an adult high school diploma. Oregon's new competency-based graduate requirements (that went into effect in September 1974 for all freshmen entering public high school) are applicable to the adult learner, since the high school diploma awarded by the community colleges and regular secondary schools must be in accord. By law, "the adult high school diploma [must be] based upon knowledge, competence, and life experiences rather than the typical Carnegie unit of credit."[2] The new requirements, stated as minimal, can be expanded by the local district. At minimum, "a person completing the Adult High School Diploma...must accomplish 11 units of required credit plus 10 elective units of credit and the specific competencies identified...for survival in our complex society."[3] The survival competencies are in the area of personal development, social responsibility, and career development.[1]

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[1] See Appendices P, M, D, and J, respectively.

[2] See Appendix I.

[3] *Ibid*.

The 21 units of credit can be granted for experience gained both in and outside the regular school setting. The 11 required units include 3 for communications, and one each for social science, citizenship, health education, physical education, laboratory science, mathematics, personal finance, and career education. (We have no information of what can constitute the content of the electives, but they--like the other requirements--emphasize demonstrable performance converted into units of credit.)

All 13 community colleges will continue to issue an Adult High School Diploma to adults over 16 years old who are not presently in school, who have less than a high school diploma, and who meet the new requirements.

The MAECOM Adult High School Diploma program is a pilot model operating in one Adult Center representing a consortium of 6 school districts in the State. The Adult Center offers the full range of adult educational programs--ESL, ABE, GED--the Adkins Life Skills program, and the MAECOM Adult High School Diploma. The MAECOM Adult High School has a separate staff including a principal, administrative assistant, educational brokers, and resource people. Also available are the services of the Center's instructional staff.

The MAECOM Adult High School program came into being in 1973 as a result of a change in New Jersey's Administrative Code governing high school graduation requirements. The code enabled the granting of a high school diploma under Plan A (Carnegie credit units) and Plan B (educational objectives). The MAECOM diploma is a Plan B diploma featuring recognition for informal (experiential) learning and self-directed independent study. Although not restricted to the adult learner, the average age of the 22 graduates was 33 years.

Plan B requires an individual to meet the equivalent of 10 credits in United States history, and the equivalent of 80 credits of "approved instructional objectives." To be awarded an Adult High School Diploma, however, the candidate must achieve a 10.5 grade level in reading, mathematics, and English language as measured by the Test of Adult Basic Education or the Iowa Test of Educational Development.

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[1] A sample model of specific competencies and suggested performance indicators has been described on page 29.

While the assessment procedures are very similar to those that characterize the Nickse program, the content of the 80 instructional objectives has not been specified beyond stating that no more than 10 credits worth of objectives can be awareded for military experience and 10 for work experience.[1] The remaining credits (or instructional objectives) are determined by the learner and the educational broker. They can be met by transferring formal credits obtained previously, through an assessment of life experiences, by employer testimony to paid work performed for a specified period of time, or by a combination of Carnegie units and instructional objectives.

The candidate chooses the method by which to learn, using any specialist or institution, including enrolling in regular high school courses, attending classes at the Adult Center, through self-study, or with tutorial help.

The Central New York External High School Diploma Program was conceived as an alternative method by which "competent" adults could be tested with dignity and their learnings ratified with a diploma. Special arrangements were made with a local school district to award its high school diploma to successful candidates. The diploma is virtually indistinguishable from that awarded to a regular graduate from that high school, although the transcript records differ considerably.

Operational since January 1975, the program is available to any adult 18 years old or older who does not have a high school diploma. To date, the program has had 97 graduates with an additional 87 currently enrolled. To attain the diploma, the adult has to demonstrate mastery of 64 Generalized Competencies and one of three areas of Individualized Competency. The project staff's learning consultants supervise the initial diagnostic testing and gives the candidates a written prescription of those competencies on which they have not demonstrated mastery. There is neither a prescribed curriculum nor a favored learning strategy.

Once the candidate indicates readiness, he enters the assessment place in which he completes a total of five tasks which taken together cover the 64 Generalized Competencies. Adequacy of his performance is judged by the staff assessor, who gives him a list of competencies passed and failed. Although the candidate must pass any competency he could not demonstrate, he does not have to repeat the entire task. Provided the candidate has made a decision about which Individualized Competency area to pursue, he can begin this assessment concurrently with the Generalized Competency assessment phase.

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[1] Candidates have obtained 5 credits for "family living," 2.5 for "home management," and 5 more for "child care and development." One candidate received 5 credits for "equestrianship" while another received 5 for "wheeling and dealing."

The three Individualized Competency areas are Occupational/Vocational, Advanced Academic, and Specialized Assessment. Most of the clients opt for the Occupational/Vocational alternative, which is assessed either through employer testimony or a performance interview. About half have selected the employer testimony option. If a performance interview in the client's field of choice has not been previously developed, staff and specialists construct one.

The University of Texas at Austin together with the TEA initiated their version of the External High School Diploma project after a presentation by Nickse in March 1975. Like the Nickse program and differing from New Jersey's MAECOM and Oregon's Adult High School Diploma, this project did not react to a change in the state's requirements for high school graduation. Rather, the rationale for this project was to help participants in adult education programs see the value of completing the program by offering such value in the form of a high school diploma.[1]

The TEA program combines selected aspects of the Central New York Program and the APL curriculum. The diploma that will be awarded to the first graduates, expected in May or June 1976, is awarded by local school boards who must vote to waive their regular graduation requirements. Like that designed by Nickse, the external diploma and the regular high school diploma will be indistinguishable. The TEA external diploma is available to persons 17 years of age or older who, if under 18 years of age, provide proof of having been out of school at least one year.

To qualify for a diploma, the candidate must score as an APL 3 on the "Placement Test," at the Advanced level on the "diagnostic skills test," demonstrate mastery in 38 Generalized Life Skills Competencies, and demonstrate proficiency in one of three Individualized Competency areas. The candidate cannot begin the two-pronged competency assessment phase until he has passed the APL-related tests.

If he scores at a level lower than APL 3, he is channeled into APL learning activities that are organized toward teaching the APL objectives. To the best of our knowledge, the 7 or 8 sites involved in the TEA External

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[1] See Appendix M.

High School Diploma program are the only sites currently using the APL curricular materials. Next year they plan to institute the APL curriculum at 5 to 6 new sites, which may not necessarily award the external diploma.

Despite their dissimilarities, these four programs are all attempting to find alternatives to the high school diploma (or, more precisely, to the criteria on which it has been awarded), and at the same time to find a way to credential adults for demonstrating knowledge and skills gained through life experience. For the most part some decision has been made concerning the nature of life experiences; in general, they are of the APL-type.

These four programs have created new assessment-certification options for adults, although they differ from one another in the extent to which functional competencies form the basis of the certification requirements. They differ along several other dimensions as well--particularly in the mix of program-determined vs. learner-determined requirements and between traditional requirements and new APL-type competencies. And they differ in how this new adult diploma corresponds with the regular high school diploma.

To qualify for a high school diploma in Oregon, the candidate must achieve a 10.5 grade level in basic skills. The MAECOM diploma requires a similar level of proficiency in reading, mathematics, and Ebglish language as determined by standardized tests. While the TEA External High School Diploma does not include basic skills requirements, in order to proceed the candidate must pass the APL test at the level of APL 3. Only in very rare instances is a potential candidate for the Central New York diploma directed to other programs (such as ABE) if his basic skill level has been determined too low; otherwise, this program varies significantly from the others in the degree to which it deemphasizes basic skills requirements.

Indeed, the Nickse program requirements for graduation include acceptable performance on five tasks (which together demonstrating 64 Generalized Competencies) and on one of three types of Individualized Competency. The candidate has no options with regard to the tasks, except that he can complete them in any order and has some flexibility in the time frame in which he does. And although he can select the area for Individualized Assessment, only the Occupational/Vocational one offers any choice (and a limited one) in how he will be assessed. Thus, all graduates of this program are comparable to one another, at least to the extent that all have passed 64 of the same competencies.

The same comment holds for the TEA External diploma, except that that there are more requirements. Candidates again have little option (except for the area of Individualized Competency): all must perform as do APL 3's, all must pass a diagnostic skills test, and all must be able to demonstrate TEA's 38 Generalized Competency Tasks.

The Oregon diploma requirements will apply to both youngsters and adults. The only difference in expected performance or competency is what might be acceptable as elective units of credit and how might they be met.

Of the four programs, New Jersey's offers the learner the most flexibility--none of the 80 instructional objectives have been predetermined--so that graduates may have very few competencies in common. As the program is being piloted at the MAECOM Adult Center, almost all the instructional objectives are (at least in part) learner-determined. Since Plan B is, however, available to high school youth, similar degrees of choice and flexibility should be open to them.

The four programs provide procedures by which the adult learner, working with project or school staff, can individualize his educational plan to some extent. All make use of some sort of diagnostic testing and/or assessment of the candidate's previous history and the results are available to him. The TEA project offers the learner the least choice, and the most restrictions and predetermined requirements. Since the TEA program currently operates only in adult education sites using APL, the candidate who is initially diagnosed at the APL 1 or APL 2 level must enroll in APL-keyed courses before he is permitted to progress to the two-pronged assessment stage.

In the Nickse program the candidate decides not only the area for individualized assessment but, if necessary, how he will learn the requisite skills and knowledge tapped by the Generalized Competencies. Since the Nickse program's theoretical policy plan does not include course offerings, the adult must go outside of the "center" to learn; a candidate can engage in self-study, enroll in adult education or high school courses, or hire a tutor.

The New Jersey program also leaves the learner free to select the method by which to learn, although it also offers on-site learning opportunities.

This program, moreover, permits the adult to convert perviously attained educational credits and life experience credit toward the graduation requirements. Previous school experience and "life experience" are also convertible currency toward meeting Oregon's 21 credits (required and elective). Since Oregon's Adult Diploma program operates in the community colleges, along with ABE, GED, and regular college courses, the adult has a plethora of available learning opportunities.

As we indicated above, the greater the opportunity for the candidate to predetermine the competencies on which he is to be assessed, the less in common will the graduates have. All of these projects are awarding the successful learner a high school diploma. This raises some question concerning the integrity of this diploma. It is not a new question and proponents for certifying adults based on competency point out that the "old high school diploma has no meaning anyhow!" At the present time, in selected locales in at least four States, a resident can earn the same high school diploma for completing the regular high school curriculum, or for completing a series of functional competency/competency-based activities; he can, furthermore, be awarded a similar certificate for passing the GED.

Oregon and New Jersey have partially resolved the problem by restructuring (or providing an alternative plan in the latter instance) the regular high school curriculum to include functional competency-type activities. Oregon has gone furthest in establishing a single set of requirements for awarding the youngster or adult a high school diploma. Oregon has mandated statewide minimum requirements, which the local districts may add to, but which will be required of both the adolescent and the adult.

In Texas and Syracuse, New York (the major site of the Nickse program), the requirements for an adult working toward a high school diploma are substantially different from the requirements of a youngster in a regular high school--although the document itself is indistinguishable to an employer, for example. The argument of the project staff is that the adult diploma requirements match the adult needs--and certainly the life requirements of an adult and a youngster differ. We question, however, why diploma requirements should differ; why not instead consider the creation of a new credential to highlight the differences. The projects staffs' response is that the high school diploma is the "coin of the realm."

We agree that a new credential presents difficulties. Participating candidates as well as society at large place a high value on the high school diploma. Without doubt, the creation of a new credential could adversely affect recruitment, and would cause problems in terms of its marketability and social acceptability.

One could continue to expand APL-type adult programs awarding the regular high school diploma, despite the dissimilar meaning of the same credential. We cannot help but raise the question, however, if there will not be a point in the expansion where the same (recruitment, marketability, and acceptability) problems would occur as in creating a new credential. Once there is widespread knowledge of the new requirements and widespread availability of the opportunity to a less carefully selected population than has heretofore been the case, there may be an entire set of new problems--including legal ones--to contend with. Even in Oregon, for example, there will be questions concerning the legality of the GED because it does not accord with the State's competency requirements.

The other apparent option is to institute more homogeneous high school diploma requirements for both the adult and the youngster-about-to-become-adult. Revising the adult diploma to better accord with the traditional high school diploma will probably result in the exclusion or deemphasis of APL-type competencies. The Oregon resolution not only provides a model for comparability in graduation requirements but recognizes everyday functional competency needs as well. Adoption of this alternative necessitates great change not only in adult education programs, but in all public high school curricula. The effort that is required will be massive and the cost astronomical. The outcome may prove worth it.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Three of the programs about which we have first-hand knowledge--Project AIM, Region X's Staff Development, and San Francisco State University's Staff Development program[1]--are primarily concerned with improving the curriculum development skills of adult education practitioners. Two other projects, Adkins Life Skills and Mocker's research into APL teacher competencies,[2] emphasize staff training. Notwithstanding the common elements, each project differs somewhat.

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[1] See Appendices B, G, and F, respectively.

[2] See Appendices C and O, respectively.

The purpose of Project AIM is to provide ABE teachers with the pedagogical skills needed to "promote motivation, self-awareness, and social consciousness" of the adult learner. Through six to eight full day workshop sessions, adult education teachers identify the needs of their student population, produce curricular materials geared to meeting those needs, and receive training in group discussion techniques, emphasizing coping skills. Teachers, once they return to their adult education centers, are expected to continue to write materials for their own use with their own students.

The San Francisco State University Staff Development Project in Competency-Based Adult Basic Education is similar to AIM. Through a series of 4 to 8 workshops, ABE teachers develop competency-based modules that reflect the APL objectives. Teachers specify the population, select the objectives, design content and instructional strategies, develop resources, and design "varied and continuous" evaluation procedures. At the end of this project, however, one set of modules will be disseminated, and they will have been field tested in ABE classrooms. Once the curriculum modules have been revised, the project staff intends to use the 24 trained teacher participants to "conduct local in-service training programs for other teachers." That is, once the materials are available, teachers should expend effort on implementation strategies and the criteria they use to select from among (all) materials.

Region X's Adult Education Staff Development program is the most elaborate. Their plan is based on the belief that the "needs and goals of their member States are quite similar" despite local variations. Staff development on a regional basis is viewed as a means for meeting common concerns, avoiding unnecessary duplication of services, developing shared expertise, and meeting state and local needs.

The approach is basically one of developing a cadre of specialists in APL to act as resource people and assist local personnel with training and implementation. Regional workshops are followed by workshops in the 4 States in which "APL awareness" is built. They plan to develop curricula, with each State assuming responsibility for a specific GKA. Curriculum development workshops are scheduled for the Summer of 1976; ABE teacher-participants will be involved in writing the "unipacks," which are to have a common format. Once they are field tested and reviewed, they will be available in every classroom.

The major purposes of APL-related staff development at the current time is to give teachers an awareness of and positive attitude toward APL, and to provide them with immediate skills to develop curricula materials. AIM differs from the other two projects in that, as an end goal, AIM seeks to develop individual teachers' capacity to create materials. The other two projects view the curriculum development focus in a more limited fashion: once materials are created, the future staff development activities change. Now groups of teachers will learn how to use the materials in their classrooms, how to evaluate them, and if necessary, how to adapt them to local needs. For Project AIM, each new group of teachers repeats the workshop cycle, each writing their own materials.

Adkins Life Skills program and to some extent the research conducted at the University of Missouri at Kansas City[1] represent different approaches to what constitutes staff development. The similarity is that both projects assume that APL functional competency-type curricula may require new (and different) teaching skills.

According to Adkins, the skills and attitudes needed to implement the Life Skills program are so different from traditional adult educators' skills as to require creating a new position. Called "Life Skills Educator (LSE)," this person is the key to a successful program. The LSE is a teacher-counselor with expertise in the affective domain. Training of LSE's is done by the project staff. It takes approximately 5 days of training to develop appropriate behaviors before they can make best use of the materials. It is probable that when the other APL-related curricular materials have reached the same developmental completion as Adkins', the interest will shift toward training staff in their use.

The University of Missouri at Kansas City ABE/APL Teacher Competency research represents a unique effort to delineate a set of competencies for staff working with APL in the classroom. The assumption underlying the research is that since "APL develops from a totally different base than ABE," one cannot expect a teacher with ABE competencies to teach APL. Regardless of the merits of the research procedures that were used to generate a set of APL teacher competencies items (and despite the quality of the items themselves), the attempt to focus on skills, knowledge, and attitudes that make a competent APL teacher is commendable.

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[1] See Appendix O.

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY OPTIONS

What are the possible directions that might be considered in strengthening an adult education program on a statewide basis? In this final section of the report, we will attempt to describe the key policy decisions that need to be made, and the more feasible of the possible alternatives that result from a particular choice.

APL is still in its theoretical infancy despite the great amount of activity it generated. It is not far enough along to permit recommending wholesale adoption of any specific system or a set of activities that we reviewed. We saw good ideas and less good ideas, plans that might work and ones that might not work as well. From our review and evaluation--as well as our own research bias--we must conclude that overall, more, and more appropriate, research and field testing needs to be done.

We would like to make our own biases and assumptions clear at the outset. We assume that:

- Some functional competency training, at least at a minimal level, which is relevant to people's lives needs to be included in the range of adult educational opportunities.
- The basic purpose of adult education is to provide people with the skills needed to solve their immediate problems and to prepare them for the future.
- The adult education experience, at any level, should empower the adult--i.e., should provide the substantive power by which an adult can choose diverse paths to attain multiple goals.
- All content materials and all strategies should be geared to and reflect the specific needs of adults which, in our opinion, differ from those of the non-adult learner. In specific, interactive and individualized experiences need to be considered in adult education programs.
- Since turnover of adult education teachers continues to be a problem, new programmatic activities should address this problem, either directly or indirectly.
- In the program design format, consideration needs to be given to the fact that the typical adult does not remain in adult education programs for a protracted period of time, although he may return periodically.

The Nature of Basic Skills As Related to Functional Competency

The APL Study is only one of the attempts to define, or redefine, the nature of functional competency. The knowledge X skills matrix generated by Northcutt effectively annuls the older notions of literacy (which reflected number of years of education and/or grade level equivalent), but retains the basic skills components by attempting to incorporate them in context.

The choice, for developmental purposes, is either to accept or reject the APL matrix, in whole or in part. The argument for rejection is that by placing primary emphasis on objectives that focus on content areas, the teaching of basic skills, which we have assumed is important, is obscured. The curriculum, then, reflects specific knowledge-based tasks, instead of adaptable coping or problem-solving skills.

One recommendation is, therefore, to reexamine the nature and type of basic skills used in successful coping behaviors to determine the relationship between coping and the reading, writing, computing, and problem-solving domain of activities. We suggest:

- a study of what people who cope well do and know in order to identify underlying basic skill levels;
- a demonstration of whether it is possible to teach problem-solving skills (to people of varying reading levels, etc.) and have them apply (generalize and abstract) those skills to the content of real-life problems; and
- a determination, through experimentation and/or review of the literature, of whether people will apply basic skills more appropriately if they learn them directly as skills, or if they learn them indirectly as part of specific tasks.

The Nature of the Knowledge Areas

There are some basic questions concerning the five knowledge areas identified by the APL study. The choice is one of accepting these (and only these), or modifying them on the basis of other evidence.

The major argument for accepting the five General Knowledge Areas is that most others working in the "APL" area have done so. Alabama, New Jersey, Oregon, and Rhode Island, for example, have apparently accepted these areas as legitimate ones on which to base the development of new curricula. Little further work needs to be done at this level of conceptualization if the 5 APL General Knowledge Areas are accepted.

An argument for modifying them is that, on inspection, several types of content are omitted. For example, there is no science, arts and humanities, or education (which formal or informal seems to be a common requirement for all people in at least 48 of the 50 states). The knowledge areas have already been revised: Transportation has been subsumed under Community Resources, an indication that they were not at the same level of abstraction or importance. Moreover, it seem likely that the Community Resource area could become part of the other areas, a suggestion being acted on by the San Francisco State University staff. Furthermore, the Nickse project (and TEA) has included tasks in the Arts, and there is a LAP about schools. Thus, even at this early stage of APL, the General Knowledge Areas have not been regarded as inviolate.

If the SED decides to accept the GKAs with modification, the revisions should be founded on empirical evidence. The most feasible and least costly sources involve a detailed review of the literature, and/or a modest replication of the procedures by which Northcutt generated them initially: asking teachers, adults, employers, and state and federal agencies and foundations. We would add specialists in each discipline to identify the specific content a person must possess for survival at a minimal level.

The Nature of the APL Objectives

In APL, 65 objectives define the General Knowledge Areas. Each person, group, or project working with APL-related materials has sets of goal-defining objectives. The question becomes one of whose set of objectives to accept, since there are some quite significant differences among them. Since all purport to be exhaustive (or at least, since none claim not to be), some choice needs to be made. The major argument for accepting one or another is that objectives already exist, and many systems have developed detailed curricular activities around them.

The second alternative is to modify the objectives. This option has been the course most frequently followed. Since there is a large amount of overlap (as well as differences) among the different sets of objectives, those in common provide a core base from which to build. The modification of objectives, similar to the GKAs, will require some additional data collection. This can take the form of:

- survey procedures, including asking teaching of adult education, questioning adult enrollees, and asking for expert input; or
- making a policy-level decision that reflects the State's philosophy and history; or
- strengthening what already is being taught in the State's adult education centers on the assumption that what is being taught in the special skills, life skills, and coping skills areas accurately reflects those things important for participants to know. To strengthen what is taking place implies surveying what is being done, and disseminating the information back to the teachers in a formalized way.

The fact that some of the APL objectives have been rejected and/or replaced suggests they were not relevant, clear, or specific (i.e., behavioral) enough to be useful. If all systems' objectives are rejected, but the need for relevant content and/or functional competencies is retained, an improved set can be generated in a manner similar to that indicated for modifying them.

To this point, the different theoretical concerns have different immediate implications, and suggest various directions. However, no matter which course, or set of courses, is followed--e.g., accepting, rejecting, or modifying the APL taxonomy and objectives in whole or in part--each has implications for curriculum development and implementation. We will summarize the implementation alternatives first.

Implementation Systems

There are three distinct options with regard to implementing APL-type content and/or activities into the ABE structure. They are parallel implementation, infused implementation, and supplementary implementation.

In an infused model, the new material is integrated into the existing curriculum so that a single new curriculum is developed. The resultant curriculum does not distinguish between the two sets of skills, attitudes, or content areas. Participation by an adult is compulsory in that, after a period of time, the new curriculum is indistinguishable from what existed before. Infused models must be comprehensive; it is questionable whether a "curriculum" made up of discrete pieces (mini-modules-units, or for that matter, merely motivational activities) could be efficiently infused.

Although infusion is a long-term, expensive effort, it has several benefits. From the point of view of the target population, an integrated curriculum demonstrates most clearly the intimate relationship that exists between basic skills ability and the ability to cope with everyday problems. Each participant, moreover, would be involved in only one program, rather than having fragmented experiences. There would be fewer problems in recruiting and maintaining a population and therefore, fewer management and recordkeeping problems. This strategy presents no new reward or credentialling difficulties assuming, of course, that its successful completion would enable an adult to pass the GED--as well as having other functional skills.

The disadvantage of infusion is that it requires a very great curriculum development effort, and one based on data that is not yet available. No matter how such a curriculum is developed, its implementation involves substantial training and retraining of staff. Although highly visible, and probably the most practical and pedagologically sound approach, a single curriculum integrating the best of ABE and APL requires a large commitment of time and money.

By parallel implementation we mean that there would be two separate programs--APL and ABE--which exist side-by-side. Students could participate in one, or the other, or in both. This type of approach will work best with a complete curriculum package of any type. The advantages of adopting a parallel strategy are that it maintains the integrity of a good basic skills program; it does not require retraining of existing staff, although it might involve new types or additional numbers of staff; and it permits evaluation of its effects.

Its disadvantages are that it may take away time from ABE instruction; create or increase space and facilities problems in a learning site; and it involves some consideration of alternative forms of rewards and credentials--since most adult education seems to be directed to passing the GED--other than the instrinsic one of improved coping behavior.

Designed for materials and/or activities that are discrete rather than hierarchical, supplementary implementation is similar to the parallel approach in that sets of materials would be available in the classroom for students to use optionally, or as required. The major difference between this model and the parallel one is in the conceptualization of how much--how complete--a curriculum is necessary for mastery of a specific functional task. The supplementary strategy presumes that one can teach a task or competency, per se. To be used effectively, supplementary implementation requires the availability of some diagnostic/placement techniques by which the classroom teacher can assign or suggest the appropriate activity.

The disadvantages of the supplementary approach to implementation are that it requires a mechanism for updating obsolete materials and replacing them in every classroom; its effects are difficult to evaluate; teachers' attitudes must be addressed, and teachers must be trained in diagnostic/

assessment procedures. On the other hand, supplementary implementation is relatively easy to start up; it is most flexible in meeting the needs of individual adults; and it requires the least in terms of a concerted curriculum development effort.

The Extent and Process of Curriculum Development

The focus of this discussion is on curriculum comprehensiveness and the processes by which curricula are developed; we will ignore issues such as the format of materials, and individualized vs. group activities.

Comprehensiveness. The question to be answered is how complete, what stage of detail, does a functional competency curriculum have to be? The the range is from assuming adults can learn on their own (like the Nickse project) to a total curricular effort such as APL. To a great extent, a decision on this issue restricts the implementation strategy.

A complete curriculum would consist of APL-type skills and knowledge in some sequential hierarchical relationship. At the very least, it would contain teacher activities, learner activities, and resource materials. The major arguments for considering a complete curriculum is that, if adopted, there would be one statewide adult competency curriculum program with one set of goals, activities, and expected outcomes. Staff development and implementation problems would not vary, and it would be possible to compare the effects of this curriculum on diverse adult populations. If this direction is considered, the State Education Department could develop its own curriculum or use another curriculum. If a complete APL-type curriculum is considered, the major problems, in addition to choosing which one, are in the design of tests and rewards and credentials.

The difficulties are more numerous: First, whose curriculum will be used? If, for example, APL is adopted in its entirety, one should wait for the developmental work to be complete, since it makes little sense to duplicate the University of Texas efforts. If, on the other hand, APL is modified, some new curriculum pieces must be created. If the APL taxonomy is rejected, but functional literacy is retained, an all-new curriculum must be developed.

Mini-modules-units can be created, based on the premise that adults with some basic reading, writing, and computational skills can be taught APL-type tasks as the need arises. That is, similarly to the LAP approach, each site could have self-contained mini-module-units for each APL-type task or content topic. Prior to adopting this alternative, however, more research needs to be done to determine if ABE students can, indeed, learn functional competencies in this manner.

The arguments for considering this option include the fact that the teaching-learning materials will be much more task-oriented; they will permit the teacher flexibility to respond to specific needs of individual students; initial developmental costs are inexpensive; updated materials can be easily maintained; and one is not tied to a single theory of learning, since there can be many units for each task, each differing in skills level and/or learning style.

If adopted, a set of diagnostic-placement instruments and other assessment tests must be available, and teachers will need to be trained in selecting the appropriate learning package. The State Education Department, or some coordinating group within the State Education Department, must establish criteria for producing these mini-module-units, for evaluating them, and for disseminating them.

The third alternative is not to enagage in any curriculum development work at all. Rather, the State Education Department could disseminate its own set of functional objectives, together with a list of resources, and permit individual teachers to create activities and materials that meet them. The AIM project provides just such a mechanism. Underlying this alternative is the belief that APL-type objectives may be already being met in New York State either through special efforts and projects, or through teacher-created materials, or as a result of the well-developed basic skills programs.

Like the attempts of Project AIM, the Mississippi tapes, and the first stage of Adkins Life Skills program, another option is to provide the adult with strong and sufficient motivation for improving basic skills. These and similar efforts assume that the learner has the capability of following through himself, or that the ABE curriculum can and does develop the crucial skills underlying functional competencies. A small demonstration of the use of the Mississippi tapes, in terms of followup needs of adult students, should be undertaken.

A last option, based on the philosophy of the Nickse project, assumes innate motivation--that once areas of deficiency are brought to the adults' attention, he would have the ability, intent, and access to resources that permit him to learn specific skills and content. While this option creates credentialling problems as well as problems involved in selecting and/or retraining staff, this diagnostic-assessment approach has several advantages: namely, the fact that no (or little) curriculum development is necessary. It is, moreover, extremely responsive to individualize adult life styles in that it permits the learner to obtain help in any number of different ways, depending on his interests, capabilities, etc., and encourages the use of resources that already exist. The disadvantage of making this a total commitment is that little data is available on costs or the kind or extent of staff development that might be required. Finally, this approach has not yet been tested with a typical ABE student.

In general, our bias is for additional research and evaluation: Specifically, a study of a complete curriculum with a smaller curricular unit to determine how much in the way of curriculum is needed to master an APL-type task; to identify those adult populations to which the Nickse program model might be appropriately expanded; and to examine the outcomes of Project AIM with a view toward determining the nature of the content of the teacher-created materials, and the ease, cost, and efficiency of this process.

Developmental Process. Except for the motivational and the diagnostic model, all other alternatives involve some curriculum development. Curricula may be developed in a number of ways, including development by ABE teachers and contracted development by outside groups or individuals.

If curriculum is created by teachers, it can be done with or without adherence to statewide guidelines, and with or without a common format. The AIM project, for example, is a method by which teacher-created materials (of any type) can be generated. To insure, however, quality control, appropriateness, and usefulness to other teachers who may not have the benefit of the AIM process, there needs to be some procedure to establish criteria for review, refinement, and dissemination. The AIM process is most applicable for materials intended to complement the regular curriculum, although it can be adapted to generate complete curriculum. The advantages of involving teachers in the production of material are obvious: they feel a sense of ownership and their attitude toward using them in the classroom is better;

the materials may more accurately reflect the needs of the adult population; development is accomplished fairly rapidly; and a promising process is already being tried in the State.

To be considered on an experimental basis is having ABE students assist in the developmental process. The resultant materials would very closely reflect their needs, interests, and capabilities; it would be an inexpensive method to try; and it would have--like the reciprocal experiences of a tutor/tutee relationship--two-way advantages.

Alternatively, the State could contract with one or several groups of people or agencies that are expert in curriculum development to produce materials that would meet state-established criteria and format decisions. The Adkins model provides a format and rationale that might be considered as a basis for contracted developmental work.

The advantages of contracted development are that it insures greatest accountability; field testing can proceed as units are developed, which results in better overall quality; it offers least opportunity for duplication; and, it is least costly in the long run, although initial costs may be high. On the other hand, this approach is least likely to meet the very specific needs of various locales (assuming, of course, that functional literacy varies from one to another locale in New York State); is the hardest to infuse into existing ABE and/or to adapt to local variation; requires a great amount of staff (re)training; and creates the most difficult implementation problems.

It should be noted that these approaches are not, and should not be, considered mutually exclusive. It is possible to set up a procedure by which ABE staff and students have great initial input into the curriculum development process, using experts to revise the products and to put them into a common format with similar foci, reflecting sound theoretical concerns. A small demonstration of such a process might be possible, using as base materials the products developed by Project AIM and the 4-stage model of Adkins.

Staff Development Needs

Specific activities (e.g., training, assessing, evaluating) for adult educators will be largely dependent on the prior decisions made about objectives, curriculum comprehensiveness, and developmental strategies. It is apparent, however, that despite the alternative, teachers will need some training and orientation. The needs of adult education supervisors and administrators will also have to be addressed, as will the concerns of "peripheral" staff (counselors, ESL teachers, etc.) in the learning sites. We will discuss staff development alternatives in terms of the target group.

No matter what the prior specific decisions are, we are assuming that some programmatic changes in adult education will be made to reflect the national emphasis on functional literacy. Thus, all ABE teachers who will be involved in any APL-type activity (whether in their classes or in their center) will need an orientation to APL; an explanation of the relationship between skills and content; an awareness of state plans, both immediate and long-range; and exposure to those materials and strategies that are being tried in other states. They must also be provided a description of the interrelationship between "APL," the GED, vocational education, and ESL.

Depending on the specific curricular choices made, teachers will need--in addition to orientation and awareness building--more specialized training. For example, if a comprehensive curriculum is to be instituted, training workshops should emphasize classroom implementation, and the procedures for evaluation. If discrete modules are considered, training might focus on diagnostics and prescriptions. If a motivational curriculum is adopted, there needs to be intensive training in motivational techniques and followup activities. On the other hand, a diagnosis-assessment-credentialling focus requires complete retraining of teachers as resources or facilitators. Additional staff, to function as assessors, would need to be recruited and trained.

If the curriculum development is teacher-created, teachers must be provided with these skills. They will also need to understand the role and responsibilities of outside evaluators. If the curriculum is developed by outside contractors, teachers using that curriculum will need training in selecting, using, and evaluating the materials.

In general, staff development for adult education supervisors and administrators could follow the emphases described above for teachers. Their training, however, should also focus on facilitating the flow among all learning center program components. Regardless of all other decisions, the staffs of the learning centers need to understand the concept of functional competency and how it relates to all program components. Counselors, for example, will need to be involved in a major way, if a motivational or diagnostic-assessment program is installed in their centers. Similarly, other curriculum decisions will necessitate addressing the specific functions and duties of such staff as ESL teachers, aides, tutors, and vocational educators.

Management Systems

Under this broad heading are included issues related to testing and recruitment, staff development, and credentialling adults--organized around the major models for implementation.

Infused Curriculum Implementation. As noted, in this strategy, APL-type activities are no longer optional for the learner. This model, like the others, presents some unique problems, although it minimizes others, such as duplicative recordkeeping and testing.

Since historically ABE has been presented as a basic skills program culminating in the GED, the new APL-type emphasis might attract a different population with different levels of basic skills. A new adult group might have spillover effects on all component programs in a center, necessitating a complete revision of all textual materials for all other programs at the site.

In the area of testing, an integrated curriculum calls for new instruments for diagnosis and placement, and mastery or competency assessment. The tests being developed by the University of Texas at Austin as part of the APL project are keyed to the APL curriculum. They, therefore, may not be appropriate for any dissimilar curriculum. Reviews of the tests of adult functional literacy[1] conclude that, in general, the quality of the available instruments vary markedly. It may be likely, depending on the definition of functional competency and the specificity of the curriculum, that none of the tests now available will be applicable. Thus, it may be well to consider an investment in constructing several kinds of instruments and tasks for diagnosis, mastery, and program evaluation. As a starting point, we recommend reexamining the New York State Tests of Functional Competency in Reading and Mathematics (passage of which will be required of all high school graduates) with a view toward constructing a test(s) of adult proficiency. This recommendation might also provide a basis for establishing a common set of minimal requirements for adults and high school youth--an especially important consideration in the issue of credentialling.

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[1] Dean H. Nafziger, et al., Tests of Functional Adult Literacy: An Evaluation of Currently Available Instruments, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 1976.

In adult education, in general, there is an assumed continuum from ABE through the GED. In a significantly changed program, the validity of this assumption becomes crucial. If, after completing the new integrated curriculum, an adult is not adequately prepared for the GED, a new form of certification is needed. The high school diploma has been used for this purpose. It provides the adult with a recognized reward that has both market and social value. The availability of a high school diploma might improve recruitment and retention, and help legitimize the adult functional competency movement. The disadvantages of awarding the same credential to adults and youth, certifying different competencies, have been mentioned earlier.

We recommend consideration of working toward a single set of competencies and the awarding of one diploma for mastery of them. Oregon and New Jersey have new regulations that facilitate this; in both states, all recipients of a high school diploma must demonstrate APL-type competencies in addition to other requirements in basic skills and more "traditional" subject matter.

Parallel Curriculum Implementation. The ABE and the APL-type curriculum exist side-by-side in this model. Many of the problems described above apply to this approach as well, with significant differences. Recruitment will be a common problem, but in this instance new groups of students will have to be recruited. They can be new to adult education or can come from existing ABE programs. In either instance, some decision needs to be made with regard to skill levels, and a selection or placement testing program instituted.

If adults can participate in both programs concurrently, there is duplication in recordkeeping. Space and scheduling problems are created as well. The adult, moreover, will need to be able to make a greater commitment of time.

If the adult is recruited to participated in only one of the two parallel programs--and in this instance, focusing on the "APL" one--the credentialling problem becomes most important. There is, as yet, no evidence that describes how a trained competent adult will perform on the GED. Furthermore, there are inequities in awarding a high school diploma to an adult who has mastered an APL-type program. The third option, that of a certification other than the GED or high school diploma, also has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of a new certificate are that it maintains whatever integrity the high school diploma and GED possess, and it educates the public that an adult set of competencies, worthy of public recognition, exists. Moreover, the availability of another credential expands the range of the potential adult target population. That is, at present, enrollees in ABE are probably there to obtain skills that lead to the GED. With a new credential, it might be possible to attract those adults who have a diploma or equivalent, but who lack particular functional or coping competencies--for example, the 9% of the population who have "some college, but score as APL 1's."[1] The state thereby provides the opportunity for a diverse and large number of people to upgrade and improve their functional competency.

The disadvantage of a new credential involves marketability and acceptability issues. To "sell" it to potential employers, admissions officers in institutions of higher learning, and so on, will require mounting a massive public information campaign. Even should this prove successful, there still exists the question of the equity of this certificate with the diploma and with the GED.

Finally, parallel programs require additional staff time (as well as additional space and other facilities) and are, therefore, considerably more expensive to implement. There are advantages in that students would be exposed to more than one teaching style, and that more teaching jobs would be created. Creating more full-time work opportunities for staff may, in the long run, upgrade the occupation of adult education teacher, since it will focus attention on the competencies required of both ABE and APL-type teachers. If differential competencies are required, criteria for selection will be identified and training programs designed. The Adkins program, an example of a parallel curricular effort, does indeed require the identification of new competencies and new training; and it may ultimately lead to the creation of a new position in the field of adult education.

Supplementary Implementation. In this implementation model design, there are very few problems in student recruitment, testing, or credentialling. What problems seem to exist cluster mostly in the area of staff development. Since this design assumes that the materials and activities are predominantly self-contained, little attention has to be directed to training staff how to use them. The problem becomes attitudinal --that is, encouraging staff to use the materials and to use them appropriately in terms of scheduling, sequencing, and with groups or individuals.

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[1] *Summary*, *op*. *cit*.

In summary, different management-related issues become more dominant depending on prior decisions concerning the type of curriculum that is implemented and the manner in which it is to be carried out in adult education centers. As we have previously noted, in the long run, an integrated curriculum, stressing those types of skills applied to those knowledge areas deemed minimal for survival, would probably be the most economical, practical, and holistic. Because so many basic questions remain to be answered--what is the content of adult functional proficiency, how is it demonstrated, what are the underlying skills, how is it measured--perhaps the best immediate goal is to begin development of parallel curricular structures. This would permit testing for effectiveness and for importance. Once such a curriculum is developed and tested, it can always be infused. This approach, in our opinion, would not only serve the needs of the adult population, but would serve to focus on similar concerns that affect today's youth.

SUMMARY ABSTRACT

Between January 1 and June 30, 1976, IRDOE, Center for Advanced Study in Education, undertook a critical examination of the Adult Performance Level study and the curriculum and staff development activities it stimulated. With funds from the NYSED's Division of Continuing Education, the "New York State Adult Functional Literacy Models" project staff examined published reports and documents, and spoke with staff of 16 projects in seven states.

Our project period was also one of great activity across the country. The formal announcement of the results of the APL study in January 1976 prompted new efforts and fortified projects already under way. To us, the national concern with APL was remarkable, and the implications that it has for the entire educational system are of major importance.

In this report we examined in detail the philosophy, taxonomy, and assessment of adult competencies as conducted by the APL staff at the University of Texas at Austin. We enumerated what, in our opinion, are problems in rationale and methodology, all of which are amenable to clarification with additional research.

The issue of defining critical adult competencies was approached by comparing the APL objectives with the objectives of six other major programs which, for this purpose, we defined as curricular programs. The match between APL objectives and the other projects' objectives was not as great as had been publicized. Even in those projects that stated they embraced the APL philosophy and taxonomy, there were important differences in the number and nature of objectives that defined functional competency. The differences in lower-order objectives or tasks that make up the more broadly stated objectives also differed. Although we have pointed up these differences, we have not attempted to asnwer the empirical question of how crucial they are. We believe that differences at this point in time can only further more intensive searches for resolution.

The curricula we reviewed differed on very many variables: the emphasis on basic skills instruction; the complexity of curriculum designs; the comprehensiveness/completeness of materials; the variations in format; the ability or experiential level of the target population; and the process by which the curriculum was generated.

Most of the work we reviewed was curriculum-related. There were, however, several projects that focused on other issues--defining staff competencies, test construction, and certification and credentialling.

We did not list specific courses of action: Rather, as a result of our assessment we presented the more probable of the alternative implications that might result from a replacement of the ABE with an APL curriculum, or from the addition of aspects of APL into the existing adult education programs. There are, in our opinion, two pedagological decisions that need to be made: The first concerns accepting the APL taxonomy in whole or in part (including selecting a particular set of objectives and objective-defining tasks) in contrast to reformulating basic skills instruction with an emphasis on problem-solving skills. The second concerns the extensiveness (comprehensiveness, completeness) of a curriculum whose goal is to improve the ability of adults to function with economic, educational and personal success in contemporary society.

Both questions can be addressed in a systematic fashion. Throughout this report we have included specific research studies that might provide base data on which these, and other issues, may be approached.

We agree that APL calls for some major rethinking of education on several levels. We must also conclude that APL has provoked much needed work and we expect much more as a result.

APPENDICES A-P

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APPENDIX A

2/24/76

Adult Functional Reading Study: Reading Activities Survey[1] - Educational Testing Service (ETS)

Primary Classification: Research project to define adult literacy in the context of reading activities.

Secondary Products: The New York State Basic Competency Test in Reading

Funding History: The ETS projects were sponsored by the USOE and related to their Right to Read Program (the Targeted Research and Development Project) initiated in about 1970. Funding was continued through December 1974 by the National Institute of Education. According to the Project Director, NIE's grant was for $1.2 million.

With the publication of the final sets of reports in 1974, there was approximately $100,000 remaining from the grant which NIE suggested be used for additional supplementary research. Among the five supplementary research studies generated was the development of a preliminary basic reading competency test for experimental use with high school students in New York State; this was a joint research venture between ETS and the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Educational Testing of the New York State Department of Education.

According to the Project Director, ETS holds a copyright on the test items; the original copyright was to expire in June 1976, unless "ETS can convince NIE that there is a market for the test."

Philosophy: The Right to Read program helped eliminate the notion of grade equivalents from the definition of literacy, and instead, defined literacy as the "ability to read, write, and compute with the functional competence necessary for the requirements of adult living." In practice, however, this definition left ambiguous the meaning of functional competence: Some answered questions include, for example: how does one know when one is functioning effectively; is it possible for an individual to function effectively without being able to read at all; and, is there a minimum level of reading skill necessary for adequate functioning?

The Targeted Research and Development Reading Program reflects the belief that "survival" or functional literacy requires practical reading skills. This study addressed the question of what people can read and what they actually do read. A comprehensive survey of adult reading activities became the basis for the construct of appropriate adult reading tasks for the assessment of functional literacy.

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[1] This is part of the Targeted Research and Development Reading Project, sponsored by USOE. A basic purpose of the larger project is "to determine the extent to which different types of reading activities promote the well-being of the individual and society."

Materials: Several research reports were produced by ETS. The first was Reading Activities of American Adults by Amiel T. Sharon, December 1972. The second was the 3-volume work by Richard T. Murphy, the Adult Functional Reading Study, published in December 1973. The report summarizing the supplementary studies, also entitled the Adult Functional Reading Study: Supplement, was published by ETS in January 1975.

In addition to these research reports, ETS has presented NIE with 170 test items for adults (20 more than was contracted for), which are copywritten and were not made available to us.

New York State has available two experimental test forms, each consisting of 40 items which can be used with ninth grade high school students.

Publisher/Producer: Although the several research reports, mentioned above, are in the public domain, ETS holds the copyright on the adult test of basic reading competencies.

Target Groups: See below for a brief description of the groups used for test development purposes.

Program Development/Implementation: The Targeted Research and Development Reading Project, first funded in 1970, consisted of three studies. The first, done at Rutgers University, was on "reading models"; the second, conducted by the California Office of ETS, was a survey of the literature on reading. The third study, published in December 1972 by ETS,[1] was called Reading Activities of American Adults. The Sharon study was an empirical investigation of what people read in order to develop adult reading tasks to assess functional literacy.

For the first phase of this project, the Response Analysis Corporation interviewed 5,067 adults, age 16 or older, during April to November 1971. These interviews represent 69% of a cross-section of the American population who could communicate orally and who consented to the interview,[2] and did not include any in institutions (e.g., hospitals or prisons), on military bases, or college dormitories. In addition to asking about general activities and specific reading behaviors of the respondents, a great amount of demographic data was collected. (These data, after weighting and complex statistical analysis, were made into an SES index; for each respondent an SES index was computed.) Furthermore, all respondents were asked to rate how important it was to him to read the item he reported reading; these ratings led to the development of an index of importance which takes into account not only the rated importance of the particular reading activity, but also the number of persons who engaged in that activity.

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[1] The author of this study is Amiel T. Sharon.

[2] About 31% of those contacted could not be or refused to be interviewed. In addition to these individuals, the study found that "five percent of all adults are nonreaders--cannot read newspaper headlines in the English language." While most of these are visually handicapped (2.3%), some othersdo read in a foreign language (1.6%); only 1.1% are defined as illiterate, or, not having learned to read in any language.

Although the results of this survey are interesting--for example, the average American adult spends one hour and forty-six minutes in reading per day, mostly newspapers, magazines, books, and job-related materials--they will not be reported on in detail.[1] To summarize, SES was found to be related to reading habits: Persons with high SES generally read more than those with lower SES. Reading is not an isolated act, but occurs in the context of more general activities such as working, sleeping, or traveling. Nonreaders report that they would like to know how to read; the SES level of nonreaders "is so extremely low that," the authors conclude, one "doubts whether they can effectively meet the demands required for survival in the contemporary American society.

The second phase of the project involved the development of adult reading tests and their administration to a national representative sample of adults. The results were reported in a study by R. T. Murphy, Adult Functional Reading Study, 1973.

During this second phase, which lasted to December 1973, the ETS testing division developed a pool of 278 items "corresponding more or less to real life reading habits," as identified in the Sharon Study. These items were divided into seven test booklets, and for developmental purposes, orally administered to 2,000 adults enrolled in Manpower and Adult Education centers in New York State who responded (orally) to the multiple choice format. As a result of this pilot testing and review by experts, the items were refined: 170 items remained.

These 170 items were arranged in 10 booklets. ETS subcontracted (one-half million dollars) to Response Analysis Corporation, who selected a "national probability sample with no replacements" and who conducted the door-to-door interviews. Everyone in a house who was 16 years or older was to be tested if they agreed to participate; an incentive of two silver dollars was given to each participant. The test lasted approximately ½ hour. In this administration, the interviewee read the test himself.

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[1] The basic purpose of this study was to describe what adults were reading as a basis for the next phase of the project--the development of reading tasks.

The analysis of the data was based on 48 sub-group responses--groups divided in terms of age, ethnicity, prior education and so on. All 170 items were retained, and are copywritten by ETS. Currently, with approval from NIE, ETS is trying to develop a market for the test.[1]

According to the Project Director, "the items resemble Northcutt's, or reflect similar kinds of things." Compared to other reading literacy tests, such as the CLOZE test or PEP test, the ETS test identifies a smaller number of people with poor skills. This result, according to the ETS staff, comes about as a result of the relevancy of the items and the fact that they are formated in ways identical to the ways they are encountered in real life.

The third phase of the project (the supplementary one) was carried out between January and December 1974. Approximately $100,000 was left over from phase two; NIE suggested that ETS use these funds to conduct 6 small supplementary research tasks. These consisted of: (1) an analysis of errors committed by respondents in the survey; (2) an inquiry into the reasons why certain errors were committed; (3) a study of the relationship of the reading tasks to decoding skills; (4) a study of the relationship of the reading tasks to a set of CLOZE tests; (5) a development and field test of an experimental test of basic reading competency in the schools; and (6) an economic analysis of the data collected in the survey.

Studies (1) and (2) provided data for test construction, item refinement, and format. They were conducted in adult education centers in New York State, as was the "decoding skills" study. The intent of the decoding study was to make a hierarchy of skills that underlie reading.

In cooperation with the New York State Education Department,[1] the fifth supplementary study tested approximately 2,033 ninth grade students in New York State during May and June 1974. The purpose of this supplementary study was to find out if the reading tasks developed for the adult study are suitable for assessing the reading skills of school students.

An experimental, preliminary test was developed consisting of 120 reading items; they were administered in multiple choice format for ease of scoring. Students were allowed 45 minutes to complete a form.

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[1] We are not sure of the relationship between the New York State test and the ETS test.

[2] Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing.

After item difficulty analysis, two sets of 40 tasks each were developed as alternative forms of a new experimental "test." In November 1974, these 2 forms were administered to 2,520 ninth grade students in 11 New York State public high schools. The results indicated that the tests needed to be shortened, or the time allowed for administration lengthened for more than one class period; the correlation between these tests and the PEP tests was .676 and .657. The authors' conclusion is that "a somewhat different set of students may be identified as in some way lacking in reading skills" using the ETS test that are identified using the PEP tests.

Program Site: According to reports in the newspapers, New York State officials proposed using a new set of tests for all ninth graders in the state. Passing tests, one in reading and one in mathematics, will be a requirement for high school graduation. It will go into effect with the class of June 1979.

Testing was done on an experimental basis in October 1975, and the next tests, probably will be given in June 1977. Students who answer fewer than 65% of the questions correctly will be allowed to take the tests again.

Evaluation: (Not relevant.)

Comments: The test developmental procedures seem rigorous and well planned. Although we have not seen either the final sets of items--those for adults and those for high school students--we feel it is especially important that they be examined closely and together.

Many of the APL-type activities will, and have already resulted in awarding adult high school diplomas as an alternative method of certifying competencies. In our opinion, there needs to be some degree of correspondence between the regular high school diplomas and the adult alternatives. The ETS test(s) may provide a way of assessing the similarity of expectations for diverse groups of high school graduates, at least at the level of minimal competencies.

APPENDIX B

2/27/76

PROJECT AIM - World Education

Primary Classification: ABE Staff Development, in-service materials

Secondary Products: Instructional (i.e., motivational) materials for ABE students.[1]

Funding History: The AIM concept was initiated in Third World countries with funding from AID.

In 1972 U.S.O.E. and Noyes Foundation provided support to World Education to adapt and design a similar approach to adult basic education in this country. This fiscal year, World Education received a grant from the Division of Continuing Education of the New York State Education Department to "transfer the process" to St. Bonaventure. They have had (309) grants from other States (see Program Sites, below).

Philosophy: The purpose of the AIM program is to provide ABE teachers with the tools to "promote motivation, self-awareness, and social consciousness" on the part of the adult learner -- in other words, "...to stimulate real feelings and the actual involvement of the learner" in the [ABE] program.

World Education views adult education as a "social process." They feel that "adults have a variety of skills accumulated [through life experiences], but need experience in group discussion...group sharing...,"focusing on "what the learner needs to know."

World Education's learning materials are designed to facilitate meaningful classroom discussion by "stimulating real feelings," and calling forth "active involvement of the learner," in relation to the main problem areas and concerns of ABE students. The training workshops provide ABE teachers with materials' development capability and new instructional practices, notably group discussion skills.

Materials: World Education has more than "100 pieces of learning materials." Samples of materials are appended. The format consists of a 4-page (1 fold - 4 sides) brochure; the front page contains a photograph chosen to "evoke the emotional theme" of the short story[2] contained on the remaining pages. According to World Education, these materials reflect a 4.0-6.0 reading grade level.[1] Although the existing materials were written by both practitioners [ABE teachers] and professionals [i.e., writers], World Education indicates that teacher participation in the development of instructional materials is a basic step in the AIM program.

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[1] Training guides and/or workshop materials for teaching the ABE teacher workshop series should be available.

[2] Compare with videotape in Stimulus Stage of the Adkins Life Skills Project.

While World Education stresses the fact that materials are "tailor made" at a given site, "10 common topic areas have been identified"--consumer affairs, housing, employment, family life, nutrition and health, interpersonal relationships, civic involvement, alcohol and drugs, public service, education--and all materials produced have been color-coded by topic.

Publisher-Producer: World Education had assumed "editorial" and "production" efforts which will be borne by St. Bonaventure. No information on the cost aspects was available.

Target Group: According to World Education, all ABE teachers are potential participants in the workshop series. However, "some teachers can't do it," "some take to the therapeutic process naturally," and the largest group "take to it when they see it works."

Workshop participants receive stipends or course credit.

Program Implementation Process - Workshops for ABE Teachers:

AIM in-service training consists of a 6 to 8 full day workshop series. The first stage consists of identifying the "needs, feelings, and experiences" of the ABE students [in the target site(s)]. It was not clear whether the "facilitator" who collects this information from ABE students, via group and individual interviews, is a World Education representative or ABE teachers trained to do this descriptive "needs assessment." During this stage, ABE teachers are shown how to synthesize these findings to arrive at the students' main problem areas and concerns.

The second stage consists of materials development, in which teachers write/create stories based on World Education's guidelines. In successive workshops the teachers receive training in group interaction techniques, including role-playing.

The final workshops consist of training in lesson planning with emphasis on "coping skills" ("taking a look at community resources") and on "language and literacy" ("extending a story to practical skills such as writing a business letter...").

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[1] The AIM brochure states that many of these narratives are (or could be) taped for ABE students who are not able to read them.

Post-Workshop Activites: In their classrooms, AIM-trained teachers act as facilitators of group discussion using the narrative materials as a focus.

Program Sites:[1]

a. In the Spring of 1975, an AIM project was conducted in Iowa with 309 funds, and "included about 100 ABE teachers from rural areas." In the summer of 1976, the University of Northern Iowa will conduct a week-long workshop.

b. According to World Education, "there is another potential project in North Carolina...but not much is happening."

c. According to World Education, the "Connecticut Staff Development project is interested" in AIM.

d. The joint venture with St. Bonaventure to conduct the workshop series in Cattargus County was "not yet started" as of the end of February 1976.

Evaluation: According to World Education, most of the evaluative information[2] on the AIM project is based on teacher comments and some in-class observations, conducted by World Education staff, of AIM-trained teachers.

Comments: The AIM approach is related to the more general APL thrust in that the content of the classroom activity; that is, the topics ("generative themes") on which the short stories are based, to some extent overlap the skills X knowledge areas that comprise the Northcutt matrix. AIM also addresses the commonly held belief that adults have relevant prior experiences that should be brought into play through new teaching strategies. The process of materials development also reflects past experience, indicating that teachers who have been involved in curricular efforts are more likely to use the curriculum in the classroom.

On the other hand, the cost-effectiveness of the AIM approach needs careful consideration in light of the high rate of teacher turnover. It is not yet apparent whether this approach responds to teacher turnover or whether each new teacher needs to participate in AIM workshops and to create her own materials. Moreover, the relationship between instruction in basic skills and AIM is not well defined. The World Education representative indicated that "AIM is not a scientific approach to reading"--although the stories do incorporate different kinds of skills. The problems of integrating AIM into the adult education framework do not appear to be well developed. For example, it is not clear who--i.e., which ABE students--are the target(can the AIM process work with ESL, GED, and others at levels lower than 4.0?). This is especially relevant in terms of skill-type activities that could be designed from the story.

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[1] The World Education representative did not mention the past-AIM program efforts in New Jersey or Alabama (see AIM brochure and New Jersey report), nor the projected plans for Texas and California (AIM brochure).

[2] The AIM brochure describes more elaborate evaluation techniques.

Finally, insufficient evidence exists concerning ABE student reactions, effectiveness in retaining student in AE sites, or impact data on students' improved ability to cope, pass tests, etc.

APPENDIX C

3/2/76

ADKINS LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM - Teachers College

Primary Classification: Counseling Curriculum Development Model

Secondary Products: a. A Four-Stage curricular model for adults; and
b. A Ten-Unit curriculum in Employment Skills.

Funding History: Work on Life Skills stemmed from Adkins' work in Bedford-Stuyvesant in 1965 , and was further refined in collaboration with the Province of Saskatchewan, Canada. Adkins Life Skills Program has received funds from U.S.O.E. and from the New York State Education Department for the past several years. They have also received financial support from the Manpower Development and Training Agency, and the Cleveland E. Dodge Foundation.

Philosophy: The main purpose of the Life Skills Program is to prepare the disadvantaged adult learners for coping more effectively with his "multiple and complex" psychological and social problems so that he can take full advantage of educational training opportunities.

According to Adkins, adult education programs must include more than reading and math skills since the adult population enroll in programs because they are "seeking a better life." Since there are no or insufficient counseling services available to this population, Adkins assumed that the affective domain could be handled similarly to other--cognitive domain--subject matter. The Adkins program incorporates a new concept, the teacher-counselor or Life Skills Educator.

Materials: The Life Skills materials consist of: (a) a theoretical model that incorporates a teaching strategy for adults, and a sequence of teacher and learner activities; (b) a short, 5-day training course for Life Skills' Educators;[1] and (c) a complete prototypical curriculum on Employability Skills.[2] Jobs are believed to be the reason most students are in adult education.

a. Model. The "Four-Stage Structural Inquiry Model" consists of four stages. (This model is the theoretical framework for designing new curriculum.) First stage is the Stimulus stage, to elicit a direct emotional response on the part of the ABE students, "to focus their attention on that particular problem," and "create a readiness for discussion and sharing of ideas." Life Skills uses videotaped presentations which are "strong enough to elicit the appropriate level of emotional response."[1] The second stage of the model is Evocation, a teaching strategy designed to "draw out and dignify what the enrollee already knows." This is followed by the Objective Inquiry stage in which the adult student is introduced to "new information and new resources, to learn more about the problem." The fourth stage, Application, encourages the adult student to practice "real behavior," to "translate his knowledge and insight into real-life (or simulated) situations."

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[1] Training guides for LSE (Life Skills Educator) should be available.

[2] One of several possible.

b. Training Course for LSE's. Training of LSE's is done by Teachers College staff and takes about 5 days. According to Adkins, they have a "program to train LSE's and prefer to train two per site." Micro-counseling and micro-teaching techniques are incorporated in the training. Since the model "requires different behavior," the LSE's are "trained to behave differently." The selection of LSE's, according to Adkins, effects the "goodness" of the program.[2] They have trained approximately 50 people as LSE's. The materials also contain Instructor's Manuals which detail the sequence of activities and suggested strategies.

c. Employability Skills Curriculum. This 10-unit curriculum or track was developed by teams of counselors and students working with Adkins. Collecting information from "counselors and other staff familiar with disadvantaged clients," they amassed data describing the major psychological and social skill requirements in the context of "work, family, and community." This yielded about 50 common "life problems," which were originally grouped into "5 tracks [topics]," although this grouping has now been expanded to 10-12 areas, such as health; personal development; home and family responsibility; exercising community rights, opportunities, and responsibilities; relating to others, etc.

One group of problems, "managing a career," has been developed into the Employability Skills Series of 10 units.[3] It consists of a Manual for the LSE (one manual for each unit), students' manuals (for each unit), videotaped stimuli, and worksheets and activities for adult students. This set of materials has undergone try-out and revisions.

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[1] Compare with the photograph on the cover of the AIM materials. According to Adkins, a stimulus as powerful as television (to which people are accustomed) is necessary.

[2] This point of view is supported by the New Jersey State Education Department staff.

[3] Who I Am and Where I Want to Go; Ten Occupational Fields; Jobs and Training; Employment Agencies and Personal Contacts; Choosing a Good Job for Myself; Planning Personal Goals; Developing a Vocational Plan; Looking Good on Paper; The Job Interview; Keeping My Job.

Publisher-Producer: The Psychological Corporation is the publisher of the _Employability Series_. A set of materials and the LSE training course are included in the purchase price of about $5,000-$6,000. Much of the materials is reusable, but a portion is not. The quoted price does not include the videotape machine.

Target Group: The materials are at the 7th grade reading level, and useful at the pre-GED level with disadvantaged people in adult education settings. In several sites, high school students can take Life Skills program and receive credit for it. In both New Jersey and some New York State sites, welfare recipients are involved in the program and can earn credit for the 25/hour-a-week requirement.

Program Development/Implementation: The curricular development grows out of a reconnaissance [needs assessment] of the target population. From a list of problem statements specific behaviors for the unit objectives are formulated. Activities matching the model are designed, tried out, systematically revised, and packaged. According to Adkins, enough is already available to delineate the problem areas; what is needed is an extension of the development to these areas. A suggested methodology is to have several agencies develop these curricula. Adkins predicts that in "three or so years a dozen such series could be available."

To implement the _Employability Skills Series_, there needs to be LSE training. The LSE should work with small groups of adults, 8-12 and 15 maximum. To be effective, the program needs a non-traditional classroom environment with videotape machines, cassette players, work areas, and movable furniture.

Each of the 10 units in the series can take from betwen 10-20 class hours. The _Life Skills_ program is not to be integrated with skills teaching; Life Skills and ABE instruction should, according to Adkins, be conducted in parallel. An "operational adult learning center should offer Life Skills + vocational education + AE literacy + high school equivalency opportunities." In some sites, adults receive credit for participation in the _Life Skills_ program.

Program Sites:

1. The _Employability Series_ of the Life Skills program is in 16 adult education centers in New York State.

2. Adkins did not mention that _Life Skills_ is also operating in nine sites in New Jersey.[1]

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[1] See New Jersey State Education Department Report.

3. The Life Skills program operates in wildcat centers for ex-prisoners.

4. Adkins' staff is currently engaged in doing a reconnaissance for the State of Connecticut.

Evaluation: Other than collecting feedback for curriculum revision, little has been done on evaluation. Most staff effort has been directed to "implementation," an area they feel is "almost as developmental an undertaking" as was the curriculum. They do have some "reactions to..." data, but it is not formalized.[1]

Comments: The Adkins Life Skills approach seems to respond both to the need for more adult content in adult education and to the emphasis on teaching strategies that take advantage of the adult life experiences. By design, however, to carry out the program trained leaders are imperative. A training program is available, although not attentive to problems of staff turnover.

Although the time needed to develop the first 10-unit series seems costly, it can be anticipated that other series could be developed more economically. On the positive side, however, is that the resulting curriculum seems to be well developed, comprehensive, sequential, and reflects an acceptable theoretical base. Moreover, it is relevant to student needs.

The most potentially serious difficulty seems to be in integrating the Adkins program with basic skills training. If, as Adkins suggests, they should be done in parallel, the additional cost of LSE's must be considered in implementation. Other problems in this area relate to the fairly high reading level required. The materials themselves, especially the learner activity, do utilize reading, writing, communication, computational, problem solving, and interpersonal skills. It seems possible to go through the materials and select the academic skills and use them as a basis for skills instruction. The Life Skills program is a group activity and seems not to easily allow for individual differences.

Other areas of concern include extrinsic rewards (credit or certification of one or another kind) to participants who successfully complete the program. In addition, criteria for participation and other diagnostic and placement procedures need consideration.

Finally, more attention needs to be focused on evaluation of the program's impact on the learner.

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[1] New Jersey State Education Department representatives have some data that suggests participation tends to help retention in other adult (Literacy) programs.

Supplement. In the March 1976 issue (Vol. XV, No. 3) of the NVGA Newsletter there is a review of the Adkins Life Skills Program.

According to the review,[1] the materials cost $5,200. There is an additional charge for training: $750 per person. The review also states that "use of the program requires a major commitment of three to four months with sessions two times a week for four hours each."

Moreover, "the basic criteria for participation in the program are to be English-speaking, to have a seventh grade reading level, and to have good attendance patterns."

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[1] By Harvey B. Schmelter, Brookdale Community College, Lincroft, New Jersey.

APPENDIX D

3/3/76

MAECOM Adult High School Program - New Jersey State Department of Education

Primary Classification: Management and Credentialling System

Secondary Products: Title VI, Plan B Graduation Requirement, New Jersey Administrative Code[1]

Funding History: Funds for the Adult High School program come from the New Jersey State Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and the Office of High School Completion.

Philosophy: The program is described as a "pilot model" featuring recognition for informal (experiential) learning and self-directed independent study as the principal approach to acquiring a high school diploma." This alternative program permits students to earn regular high school diplomas--i.e., the diplomas awarded by a regular high school--by meeting certain educational objectives instead of credit-hour requirements. The intent was to develop a program "which would reflect individual adult interests and goals, have a structure flexible enough to provide the maximum amount of choices in content and format, and be able to accommodate a variety of schedules."

The diploma is a Plan B diploma, awarded on recommendation of the Adult High School principal by the Monmouth Regional High School.

Materials: No special curricular materials are used in this program. Standardized tests are employed diagnostically and for assessing performance levels in basic skills, and specially prepared assessments are devised for the instructional objectives.

In addition to the systematic procedure, certain forms have been developed. One summarizes prior learning experiences including how they are evaluated, how many credits they are worth, and how they are approved. There is also a program planning form which details the learning experience, the methods of study, and an estimate of the credits. The "extended application" consists of job history;

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[1] When Plan B was effected in 1973, knowledge and competencies acquired through life experiences--informal learning experiences--were to be recognized and accredited. In addition to meeting the equivalent of 10 credits in United States History, "an individual may receive up to 10 credits for work experience, 10 credits for military experience, 30 credits for on-the-job training/ apprenticeships, and 5 credits for each specialized area of knowledge assessed by examination" for a total of the equivalent of 80 credits or "approved instructional objectives." Apparently, regular high school age students are also permitted to earn their diploma through "approved objectives," rather than through Plan A's Carnegie unit credits.

military training; a rating form of what "you do and know" and how important, enjoyable, etc. these things are to you; future plans; and an autobiography. They have a "graduation letter" and a "transcript." The program has also developed a "sample assessment package" which includes the objectives, questions for the assessor, and demonstrable skills.

Publisher/Producer: Not applicable.

Target Group: Since July 1974, according to the representative from the New Jersey State Education Department, the program has had 22 graduates, the average age of whom was 33 years. Approximately one out of every five people seeking high school completion opts for the Adult High School diploma. Although we are not certain if volunteering is the only criterion for enrollment, it is interesting that about 36% of the enrollees have met the 10.5 basic skills requirement before entering the program and have only an average of 47 objectives to meet for graduation. Thus, whether self-selected or not, the group of adults tend to be older, with fairly high levels of basic skills, and some formal or informal educational background for which they are credited on enrollment.

Program Development/Implementation: The Monmouth Adult Education Commission received approval from the New Jersey State Department of Education in July 1974 to establish the Adult High School, under the sponsorship of the Monmouth Regional Board of Education and the direction of an Advisory Council.

The Adult High School staff is composed of a Principal, Administrative Assistant, "Brokers in Educational Experiences," and resource people. By tracing an individual through the program process, the duties of the staff, the obligations of the learner, and the materials and other resources used will be described. Thus:

The first stage is an orientation, "an explanation and comparison" of the adult High School with other alternatives for high school completion. The Broker and Resource people participate with the potential learner in this activity. The prospective student takes the TABE in Reading, Math, and English, fills out an 8-page application (which includes a job resume, an autobiography, etc.), and provides a copy of previous high school transcripts.

The next stage is the development of the program profile (i.e., course of study) worked out in approximately three meetings between the learner and a broker. The Program of Study Phase is the development and identification areas of study, future goals, and special interests of the learner. The course of study is in the form of instructional objectives, developed by the learner, advisor and resource person. It is approved by the MAECOM Adult High School Principal and the Monmouth Regional High School Board of Education. If the student has achieved a 10.5 level on each of the TABE areas, "there is no further requirement...in the basic skills area."

The broker evaluates official transcripts and transfers all credits with the exception of physical education. The learner can then choose to graduate based either on a credit count of 80, or on a combination of credits and instructional objectives. (Everyone must have 10 credits in American History to graduate.)

Informal experiences of the learner, identified on his application, are "verified by specialists through a process of assessment which enables the learner to exhibit his competencies." In the Adult High School Program, 90% of the credit earned is based on informal learning.

The last stage, Program Development and completion is the "work-producing stage in which program plans are fulfilled." Plans can be redesigned by the broker and learner and progress is assessed on a task-oriented basis. There are individual broker-learner conferences as well as group meetings. The learner must prove he has accomplished the program plans to earn credit. A specialist in the identified areas assesses the experiences by either: observation of a product or of a performance, or oral examination, or written examination. When the contract is fulfilled, the Monmouth Regional High School Board of Education awards the high school diploma.

Classroom Resources:

Time: The program operates 12 months a year and is open during the day and at night. There are 4 enrollment orientation sessions per week. Since the program plan differs for each enrollee, the time a learner spends to achieve his goals differs. According to the administrative assistant at MAECOM, the average length of time spend by an adult learner in the program is 6 months, and the average number of credits earned is approximately 47.

Resources: The learner chooses the methods by which to learn. He can make use of "any community institution or training center, college, or resource specialist" to assist him in obtaining his objectives by specified dates projected in advance. Basic skills study can be done in the MAECOM Learning Center, by self-study at home, with a volunteer tutor, or attending day or evening high school classes. It is interesting to note that all students have elected independent study rather than the more formalized classroom approach to meeting the instructional objectives, and tend to elect self-study, tutors, or the Learning Center for basic skills.

Staff: In addition to administrative staff, MAECOM has availability to resource people in the areas of U.S. History, English Literature, Home Economics, Art, Ceramics, Business Education, Nursing Education, Equestrian Skills, Jewish Customs, Environmental Sciences, Psychology and Psychic Phenomena, Photography, and Agricultural Education. These people serve as "assessors of informal learning, instructors in content areas, and consultants for independent projects" as needed.

Brokers work with learners on an individual and small-group basis to advise and assist in program planning, development, and completion. They give learners "continuous feedback on their progress, direct them towards realistically assessing their status in relation to their goals and provide direction on sources of information."

Program Sites: The Adult High School Diploma operates in one site, the Monmouth Regional High School. The staff of the Adult High School consists of a Principal, Administrative Assistant, and brokers and resource people. It is under the control of the Monmouth Adult Education Commission which is composed of 6 school districts.

Evaluation: A first year of operation report is available, describing the Adult High School Program. Although 22 persons were graduated, no data is available to us estimating the cost of the program. According to the representatives, however, since the average stay is 6 months and the average number of credits earned is 47, this is "much less expensive when compared with the number of credits earned in 6 months of regular high school." "Research and development costs are...high"; however, it is "anticipated that per student costs will not be higher than those of other accredited evening high schools."

No other evaluative data are available.

Comments: Not enough is known about either the selection of enrollees, nor the costs of the program, to arrive at general conclusions.

There are differences between this and similar adult high school diploma efforts--NYS and TEA. The New Jersey State Education Department MAECOM Adult High School Diploma appears to require a higher performance level in basic skills, and has more flexible instructional objectives. For graduation, the adult needs the equivalent of 10 credits in U.S. History, and 10.5 grade level in basic skills: The distribution of the 80 instructional objectives is not specified, beyond stating that no more than 10 credits can be awarded for military experience and 10 for work experience. A person can get, for example, 5 credits for "foods/nutrition," 5 for "child care and development," 5 for "family living," 2.5 for "home management," and 5 for "equestrianship." In our opinion, more attention needs to be paid to identify some generalized areas for objectives to insure some uniformity while at the same time acknowledge both past experiences and future goals.

APPENDIX E

3/3/76

The New Jersey Adult Basic Education Curriculum Guide - New Jersey State Department Office of Adult Basic Education

Primary Classification: APL-type Curriculum

Secondary Products:[1]

a. The MAECOM Adult High School Project; Adkins Life Skills Project; Project AIM

b. ABE Mathematics Curriculum Criterion-Referenced Test

Funding History: New Jersey's ABE program is federally funded under Title VI, ESEA and is available to "any adult 16 years of age or older 'whose inability to speak, read, or write the English language constitutes a substantial impairment of their ability to get or retain employment commensurate with their real ability....'" New Jersey has expanded this basic concept to reflect "the needs of many adults to function in society and to develop their learning potential."

According to the Supervisor, New Jersey's adult education budget is approximately $3.7 million, but as of early March the Governor wrote Adult Education entirely out of next year's budget.

Philosophy: According to the Supervisor, the Adult Basic Education movement in New Jersey stressed local autonomy. Each Adult Education Center developed its own curriculum, amassed materials, and did all necessary teacher training.

March 1974 was the beginning of the first coordinated statewide attempt to develop a curriculum framework for ABE instruction. The envisioned curriculum was to have "a living guide...list academic skill areas; present an overall procedure for individualized ABE instruction; list tasks needed by adults to function in a complex, technological society; and enumerate activities that the instructor should use...." They wanted to "tie life skills to literacy...", and create a curriculum that would mesh "computational and communications skills to APL-type tasks."

Materials: The current set of materials, still considered to be in draft form, consistsof classroom packets for ABE instructors' use. There is a packet for each of the 5 Northcutt Knowledge Areas. Each packet consists of a separate page(s) which includes a performance objective and an "enabling objective." The performance objectives are taken in toto from the work of Harry Frank at Auburn University.

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[1] Although not secondary products to the creation of the APL-related curriculum effort, the New Jersey State Office of Adult Basic Education is currently piloting an Adult High School (see separate report on the MAECOM Adult High School and "Plan B") in one site, has been implementing the Adkins project in 9 sites (with generally "excellent results" according to the Administrative Assistant to the Monmouth Adult Education Commission and the Supervisor of the Office of ABE).

Like the Auburn materials, included on each page are "instructor activities," "learner activities," and "resources." When appropriate, the computational skills necessary to perform the activity are included.

Also available, in rough draft form, are the pieces of curricula design that contribute to the curriculum model. These include the breakdowns of computational and communications skills, and the cross references between the former and the Knowledge Areas.

Also available is a "criterion-referenced test for the ABE mathematics curriculum." This has been described as non-validated, and no information was obtained regarding its use either, in terms of diagnosis/placement or mastery.

Producer-Publisher: Most of the materials--the hierarchy of communication skills, the hierarchy of computational skills, and the Knowledge Area tasks (separately and cross-referenced)--exist only as "Rough Draft." "Whole packets of these materials," in draft form, will be available in each Adult Education classroom by mid-March.

Target Group: These materials, when complete, should be useful for all adult basic education levels, with the exception of ESL students. The hierarchy of underlying basic skills allows the entry of the individual at appropriate points in the sequence. More specific information on the usefulness with the wide range of ability levels in AE settings should be forthcoming after the field testing.

Program Development/Implementation: As indicated, work began 2 years ago when New Jersey decided to develop their first statewide ABE curriculum guide. The 5 ABE Resource Centers, each of which is on a college campus, are to be responsible for the curriculum.[1]

A committee or "task force" was formed to examine and "synthesize other state curricula and revamp some of the content in order to cover the needs faced by New Jersey's adult population." The Committee consisted of "local ABE program directors and teachers of Adult Education, Resource Center staff, and representatives from the New Jersey Department of Education's Consumer Education, Career Education, and Right to Read programs." (It should be noted that during this time, representatives from New Jersey were on Northcutt's Advisory Board and were very conversant with the most recent APL-related activities. Furthermore, the impact of "Plan B" in effect in New Jersey since 1973 also contributed to the direction the ABE curriculum seems to be taking.)

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[1] The Resource Centers, 4, were first established in 1966 and were to be primarily responsible for monitoring adult education activities, including such things as counting students in adult education classrooms.

The Committee's review of other states' curricula found them to be inadequate. As a result, they decided to develop their own guide, "relying extensively" on the work of both Northcutt and Harry Frank. At the classroom level the set of curriculum guides were to "help the practitioner find his way to a more rational set of lessons for adult students...to acquire the performance skills necessary to remain economically and intellectually viable in an increasingly complex society."

As described by the Supervisor, they wanted to "use APL tasks as CONTENT...," and they wanted to develop skills through that content.

They started by building an outline of skills in the computational area. This area was "easiest...the skills are identifiable and sequential." They then went on to communications skills, which "proved more difficult." They broke down communications into the following subskills--"perception, structural analysis, and emphasis on meaning" (comprehension). Each subskill had 4 parts--"listening, speaking, reading, writing"--which were roughly sequenced. Auditory discrimination is, thus, a perceptual-listening skill.

The next development step, overlapping the computational and communications skills development, was to develop a format. They used Northcutt's 5 Knowledge Areas and Goal Statements, Frank's objectives[1] [which they call "Performance Objectives"], and "performance tasks."

They then attempted to cross-reference each Knowledge Area with computational skills.[2] That is, they tried to link each performance task to the level and kind of computational skill--if any--needed to master that task. They also cross-referenced computational skills to objectives and tasks.

These developmental activities led to the classroom packets, one for each objective and task in each of the 5 Knowledge Areas. Very similar to Frank's format, and using some of his activities, these packets include instructor's activities, activities for learners (including the computational skills),[1] and resources. They have begun work on the Health area: one center has "developed 40 readings in health" and the activities include "vocabulary, a reading comprehension and questions section, and application activities."

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[1] The decision, according to the Supervisor, was based on their need to "eliminate the value judgments that seemed to be in Northcutt's materials--particularly in the consumer economics area."

[2] They anticipate, but have not as yet, cross-referenced Knowledge Areas and communications skills.

In-Classroom Activities: According to the Supervisor, for the field test they will train ABE teachers to use the curriculum.

The primary strategy underlying the curriculum is "a diagnostic-prescriptive approach to individualized learning" which consists of the following 6 phases: "intake, initial testing, diagnosis, prescription, instruction, and evaluation." For evaluation purposes they are intending to use "non-validated criterion-referenced tests" for the APL objectives.

Program Sites: No information was available concerning the number or kind of sites using or planning to use the Knowledge Area X computational skills curriculum, other than as a field test.

Evaluation: Scheduled to start March 15 and run through the end of June, trained ABE teachers will be required to "use a packet at least one time per class session (should take about half an hour) with at least one student or in a small group." Evaluation will consist of teacher reaction, feedback, and will be the basis for modifications.

Comments: The effort to create curricular materials incorporating both survival and basic skills is a noteworthy undertaking. Like the other curriculum development efforts discussed, New Jersey's approach has both positive and negative features. On the plus side, is the attempt to interweave skills into the tasks--i.e., the survival or coping tasks are not necessarily seen as goals in and of themselves, but as content relevant to the adult population. As a matter of fact, as of this time, this is probably the most "heavily basic skills" loaded curriculum that we have seen. On the other hand, very much effort has been put into the developmental side with less attention to the evaluation and research issues. Although the plans to field test the part of the curriculum that is available will probably provide information important in terms of relevance, interest level, and so on, the more significant questions of impact and effectiveness are not yet addressed.

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[1] Also, of course, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities--but not detailed.

This curriculum, similar to others that have been reported on, starts out with intents that seem to be fairly common (i.e., the APL goals and selected objectives); however, like the others, it incorporates different sub-objectives and tasks--leading to the primary issue of whether the same goal can be achieved via alternative paths.

Moreover, there exists some question about the ability level of the people to whom this curriculum is targeted. Finally, the social interaction opportunities, apparently so important in current thinking about adult education, seem not to have been directly engaged.

APPENDIX F

3/8/76

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN COMPETENCY-BASED ADULT BASIC EDUCATION
San Francisco State University

Primary Classification: ABE Staff Development

Secondary Products:[1] APL-related instructional modules

Funding History: In 1974, a workshop was offered by the Staff Development Project at San Francisco State University in cooperation with the Far West Laboratory in Educational Research and Development. The purpose of this conference was to "explore the potential for implementation of competency-based ABE and, in particular, the use of the APL competencies in curriculum development." Last year the "California State Education Department gave a grant to the Far West Laboratory" who, in turn, "subcontracted the project to San Francisco State University." This is the second year of the project, during which they will field test the modules. According to the Project Director it is "unlikely that the project will be refunded for a third year." The funding is through Phase II of the Region IX ABE Staff Development Project.

Philosophy: According to the Project Director, while "Northcutt's research was standardized on [a sample of] the entire United States population," the "curriculum should be designed for a targeted subpopulation." Thus, the rationale for this project is to help ABE teachers: (1)"determine the needs of specific student populations representing the range of individual and cultural diversity of ABE populations in Northern California," and (2) "select competencies to be developed and to design instructional modules to develop these competencies."

The project staff predicts that the Adult Performance Test will eventually supplant the GED which has an entirely different content. According to the Project Director, "employers prefer the GED to a regular high school diploma... and would prefer--react favorably and positively to--the APT in preference to the GED."

The primary methodology employed to develop curricula responsive to the needs of specific target populations is a workshop series, which according to the Project Director, had been successfully used in the past to develop consumer education materials for students in K-14 in California.

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[1] In addition to the production of instructional materials by and for ABE teachers, this project seeks to "involve graduate students"--using the project as field training--and to develop a new mode of cooperation between the state department, the Far West Laboratory, and the State University system, and ABE teachers and administrators. In the current year, two graduate students are involved.

Project staff were of the opinion that materials--instructional modules in this instance--do not have to be "developed" anew by each group of teachers (assuming similar student populations), but that in order to involve teachers in the process they "should become knowledgeable about all materials and learn to select among them, to use them in new ways." That is, subsequent to the development of a complete set of modules for one site, attention of ABE teachers needs to be directed to teaching strategies and to criteria for selecting materials.

Materials: According to the Project Director, by Summer 1976,[1] they will have "approximately 21-22 instructional modules" that reflect Northcutt's objectives. As defined, a "module is a lesson unit or plan...instructional modules are not curriculum, but rather are guides to what the teacher should do." Modules have been developed in 4 of the 5 general Knowledge Areas of Northcutt: Consumer Economics, Health, Occupational Knowledge, and Government and Law. The fifth area, that of Consumer Resources, has been integrated within each of the other four areas.[2]

There are 6 major "steps in planning a Competency-Based Module in ABE." Step 1 specifies the population. Step 2, "constructing or selecting objectives..., includes objectives in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domain. Steps 3 and 4, identifying concepts and content and designing teaching strategies include: an affective opener or common experience;...audial visual, hands-on approaches to learning;...use of large-group, small group, and independent study;" and "learning experiences clearly related to all stated objectives." Step 5, Resources, includes both teacher-made and other resources (appropriately acknowledged) and clear directions for their use. Step 6, Implement and Evaluate, calls for appropriate evaluative procedures that are "varied and continuous" and that "adequately sample content"; if possible pre- and post-assessment techniques are called for. The ABE teachers are trained in diagnostics, using such procedures as the CLOZE test, and "functional word lists for adults," such as the Kucera-Francis Corpus and the Metzel lists. As post-assessment procedures the Project Director preferred criterion-referenced tests.

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[1] These modules are not available for dissemination, according to the Project Director, as well as representatives of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and the Oregon State Education Department. This was also confirmed by the Far West Lab, the prime grantee.

[2] According to the Project Director, Northcutt agrees with them that the area of community resources should not be considered separate from the others, but should permeate them.

Throughout these steps is an emphasis on specificity, replicability, implementation, and evaluation strategies.

Publisher-Producer: Currently, the San Francisco State University Project team oversees the design, revision, and field-use production of the modules. Other sources informed us that they will be copywritten.

Target Group: The materials are "geared to literacy [ABE] levels 2 and 3," which they define as an approximate 4.0 equivalent. Literacy level 1 has been defined as ESL, and is not part of the target group of adult education students. However, according to the Project Director, the literacy level is one of their biggest problems; i.e., how to accommodate for a variety of backgrounds and a range of abilities in one setting. A possible alternative is to totally individualize the students' activities, but in so doing "one loses the social interaction aspect which is important in adult education."

In terms of the target group for the workshop series, 8 teams (see Sites below) of a total of 24 ABE teachers--selected in consultation with State and local ABE administrators--have participated. These teams are "representative of teachers of undereducated adults in large urban, small urban, and suburban settings...."

Workshop participants can get University credit for this experience--through the University Extension Division--and can apply 6 credits toward their MA.

Program Development/Implementation:

Workshop Series, Year 1. In the first year, there were four 2-day workshops for the ABE teacher teams, scheduled at two-month intervals; participants' travel costs and per diems are paid by their local districts. In the first workshop, the participants identify the characteristics of their student population; the second workshop focuses on teaching strategies for the modules. The third workshop is devoted to reviewing resources, including materials that they may have already been using in their classrooms. In the final workshop, they focus on evaluation procedures. Between workshops, the Project Associate makes site visits to help ABE teachers.

According to the Project Director, these four workshops "are the process by which instructional modules in the 4 general knowledge areas" are generated. As a result of the first-year activity, there are "21-22 instructional modules."

Workshops, Year 2. In the current year, four additional two-day workshops are planned. (See page 6, "Program Sequence Chart.") This year, however, the main emphases are on field testing the modules and refining and repackaging them. The ABE teachers are "taught how to evaluate." In addition to field testing in the original sites (i.e., those from which the ABE teachers came and developed the modules), new sites are included to provide some information about dissemination and replicability problems.

Workshops, Year 3. Although the funding for next year is uncertain, the third year plans include dissemination of materials and replication of the first-year workshop series "from scratch in Southern California." With the support of the Project Co-Directors they are planning to use the 24 trained ABE teachers to conduct local in-service training programs for other teachers.

Program Sites:

1. In the first year 8 sites, 7 in Northern California and 1 in Reno, Nevada[1] participated. The sites ranged from large (e.g., San Francisco) to small (Eureka with 1 ABE teacher), from inner city to suburban and rural, and so on.

2. In the second, current year, Tucson (Arizona) and 2 additional sites in California (Tracey and Watsonville) were added.

3. According to the Project Director, they are now negotiating with each of the other states--Nevada, Arizona--in Region IX to replicate the Staff Development process.

Evaluation: According to the Project Director, the modules have been refined as a result of extensive field testing. The modules "have been field tested in the sites in which they were developed and in new sites." The ABE teacher-participants are "trained in how to evaluate."

The staff development process, according to the Project staff, has proved viable in the past--in that it resulted in the development of materials.

Comments: It is difficult to comment on either the staff development process or on the instructional modules that result without access to those materials. According to many sources, none of whom have seen the modules, they are "supposed to be very good."

From the information garnered, several aspects of the project seem viable. First, the use of ABE teachers (who have gone through the process) to train other teachers in their local districts promotes dissemination; however, training manuals or guides were not made available. The second aspect is that they appear to be approaching

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[1] The Reno site dropped out at the end of the first year.

Northcutt's objectives in a systematic way--perfecting several before going on to the remainder. On the other hand, they are addressing instructional goals and there is no estimate of the work remaining at the curriculum level. The Project Director raised, without resolving, the difficulty of dealing with individual student differences.

Finally, in terms of implementation in adult education classes there is no information available on either the problems inherent in integrating APL-related instructional strategies with basic skills, or with credentialling or any other form of recognition for successful completion of the module materials. Many of these comments, of course, may be resolved when the modules are available for review. For example, the materials themselves may provide answers to such questions as the relationship between APL objectives and basic skills.

PROGRAM SEQUENCE CHART

September - 1975	October	November	December	January - 1976
1. Selection of at least two new field-test sites with comparable populations. 2. Planning and preparation of materials for October workshop.	10/9-10/10 Workshop #1: Preparation for Field Testing 1. Selection of modules to be tested. 2. Selection of strategies for field testing. 3. Establishing criteria for evaluation.	1. On-site arrangements and beginning of field testing. 2. Follow-up staff visits. 3. Planning for Workshop #2.	12/11-12 Workshop #2: Refining of Modules 1. Revision of modules based on feedback from field tests. 2. Preparation for recycling and continued testing. 3. Preparation for media productions.	1. Continue field testing. 2. Begin demonstration media production. 3. Follow-up staff visits. 4. Planning for Workshop #3.

February	March	April	May	June
2/26-27 Workshop #3: Module Completion 1. Final revisions, modifications, and expansions of modules. 2. Sampling of media productions. 3. Planning for completion.	1. Complete demonstration media packages. 2. Complete revision, expansion and testing of modules. 3. Follow-up staff visits. 4. Planning for Workshop #4.	4/22-23 Workshop #4: Preparation for Dissemination 1. Final production for dissemination. 2. Evaluation of products.	Editing, Publication, and Duplication of: 1. Demonstration packages (videotape and sound-slide). 2. Printed modules. 3. Final reports.	

APPENDIX G

3/10/76

Region X Adult Education Staff Development Program[1] - Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Primary Classification: Staff Development Project: Regional, State, and Local

Secondary Products: Format and agreement for producing Learning Packages (curriculum)

Funding History: 1975-76 is the fourth year of the Region X Adult Education Staff Development Program. The program operates under a Consortium Board, a "facilitative organization" composed of the Staff Development Program Director and other staff from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, the four state directors, and the four deans of education of the State's universities. Funds for the Staff Development effort are allocated by the Consortium. The four states in the Region contribute to the consortium in the same proportion in which the ABE funds are allocated to the states.

In addition to staff development, other 309-funded projects in states in Region X include: APL curriculum development; APL-ESL curriculum objectives; competency-based curriculum development projects for new immigrants; and the Oregon Adult High School Diploma project.

Philosophy: The basis for the Regional Approach to Adult Education Staff Development reflects the belief that the "needs, procedures, and goals" of the states are "quite similar," despite specific demographic, geographic, and programmatic differences. Staff development, planned and implemented regionally, avoids "unnecessary duplication of...services...and develops shared expertise and materials."

For the current 1975-76 year, the major priority was in ESL; "APL was second in importance," but according to the Program Director, "next year APL will be given first priority."

Materials: The basic materials for the programmatic effort at the Regional levels consist of a Regional Staff Development Plan (in narrative form) and a Plan for Implementation: Adult Practical Literacy in Adult Education Instructional Programs. Area (i.e., within state) workshop materials, for the purpose of delivering information relating to APL-activities, and increasing awareness and interest of local ABE staffs appear to be the responsibility of the respective states.[1]

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[1] Many of the staff development goals--including, for example, staff development programs for ESL instruction, pre-retirement, and mentally and physically adults--are not directly related to APL-type activities; as such, although some information is available about them, they will not be included in this report.

In addition to these planning materials, and other promotional materials,[2] the Northwest Lab has a Learning Package Format, which according to the Program Director, was an outgrowth of other work in curriculum done by the Lab.[3] The format will assure that all projects' curricula developments will incorporate similar foci. (The format will be discussed below, see Program Implementation/ Development.)

A Handbook was developed for the Regional Workshops and covered, according to the Program Director, such things as "how to evaluate." It was directed to the regional coordinators.

Publisher-Producer: Materials are available from the Regional Staff Development group (notably, personnel from the Northwest Lab), as well as from the four state directors of adult education and their coordinators.

Target Group: The Regional Plan is focused on State Adult Education Staff, adult education coordinators, and adult education faculty and students at the state universities. As a result of the November 1975 conference, staff members from the 88 local adult education programs in the region were invited to serve as APL coordinators. They were to form a corps of resource people who, among other duties, would develop and implement local workshops. In addition to the local coordinators, there is at least one Staff Development Coordinator for each state in the region. (This team is headed by Aubrey Gardner.) Oregon has a team of them.

At the state level, 1975-76 workshop participants will focus on the adult education teachers.

Program Development/Implementation:

a. Staff Development. The Consortium Board approved APL as a regional priority for the 1975-76 year.[4] On November 18-20, 1975 a Regional Workshop on APL took place in Portland, Oregon. According to the Program Director, this "regional planning workshop was for APL Staff Coordinators 'local coordinators,' who were staff members of their ABE local programs." The November workshop was attended by representatives from 75 of the total of 88 local programs in the 4 states.

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[1] See Oregon Staff Development Workshop,Linn-Benton Community College.

[2] Several issues of XCHANGE, for example, are devoted to APL materials and activities.

[3] The Lab is attempting a "resource bank" for curricular materials. According to the Program Director, they "have a lot of learning packages...ranging from 'how to make a reed basket under water' to 'how to add.' "

[4] That is, the Consortium accepted the 1975-76 Regional Staff Development Plan.

The major goals of this Regional workshop was "to develop a staff of specialists for the implementation of APL curricula"--to train a "core of staff... to assist in the conduct of area workshops...and to act as a resource person" in APL content. The specific content areas mentioned included "developing curricular materials and evaluation." To support the evaluation focus, the staff developed "an evaluation planner," described as a "how-to-evaluate book" to help with regional, state, and local planning.

The coordinators received additional training, on a state-by-state basis, on how to coordinate local activities, including how to establish and conduct workshops. The implicit goal of this phase was to insure as little duplication and as much sharing as possible.

After the November workshop, the coordinators were to replicate the regional workshop on APL at the state level. Oregon decided to conduct 5 such workshops, each focused on a different geographical configuration. By mid-March, Oregon was in the process of conducting the workshop for the third time.

The Oregon state-level team which, among other duties, conducts these workshops, includes in addition to the Staff Development Coordinator, a Curriculum Coordinator, and the State Education Department Specialist in Basic Education and High School Completion. They also function, according to the Program Director, as "regional specialists." The purpose of the workshop we participated in was twofold: "to do away with fear," and "to ask the participants what they would like to try out by the end of the year." The participants at the March 12 "Staff Awareness Building" workshop at Linn-Benton Community College included adult education teachers and other faculty, administrators, and graduate students from community colleges. They were exposed to the history of the Northcutt APL study and APL-type programs in other states.

Concurrent with these "Awareness Workshops," there was to be another series of workshops to increase the APL-awareness of "key decision-makers." These "key people" include selected members of the states' education departments, states' advisory committees, and business and industrial leaders. According to the Staff Development Program Director, "both Oregon and Alaska have already each conducted one such workshop for people in their state education departments." Workshops for employers are planned in May.

After the Regional Workshop and the followup activities, until the end of June 1976, ABE teachers were to be encouraged to try out some APL-related materials and activities in their classrooms. According to the Program Director, the ABE teachers would be asked to "put together some materials, try them out, and provide feedback on the experience." The feedback, in terms of teacher reaction, would be the basis for summer [1976] workshops resolving problems of process and materials.

A summer workshop(s) is scheduled for ABE teachers in every state in the region with the exception of Alaska. The major purpose of these workshops are to provide ABE teachers with curriculum development skills. Region X is planning a series of summer workshops for the coordinators who will be provided with additional skills and materials in order to be able to give their ABE teachers on-site support. An additional summer workshop is planned, a joint Region IX-X one, one of the purposes of which is to share activities and materials--"especially the San Francisco State University modules."

b. Curriculum Development: According to the information provided by the Staff Development Program Director, there are a number of other 309-funded projects on-going in Region X, most of which are to develop APL curricula. The division of responsibility has, in this instance, been based on curricular content. "At the regional, state, and university level, there has been a 'gentlemen's agreement' that Idaho will concetrate on the development of curriculum in Government and Law, Oregon[1] will concentrate on creating Health and Community Resources curricula, Washington will focus on Occupational Knowledge, and the Northwest Lab has asked for federal money to do the Consumer Economics curriculum development."

There has been agreement that a common format is called for (see p. 6). The Program Director explained that their Step 3-Objective is "Northcutt's enabling objectives restated into behavioral objectives." The Pre-Assessment Instrument will be "competency-based, will be designed to be demonstrable, and will be 'open' in that the student will know what he is being assessed on." The five alternative learning activities (#5) will use "different media and/or different cognitive learning styles." The QUEST activities (#8) are extended activities for"enriching, broadening, and deepening...." Although many learning packages have been developed by the Lab using this format, "none as yet are APL-related," according to the Staff

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[1] For a description of Oregon's curriculum development efforts, see the Oregon Department of Education report.

Development Program Director. He indicated that Idaho will "probably have the first developed learning packages."

In addition to these APL-curricular projects, Idaho has received some special monies to develop ESL coping skills programs for Southeastern Asians; Oregon is working on developing a resource bank of competency-based objectives for non-English speaking, or new immigrants, and Washington has "not yet started doing anything in APL."

Program Sites: Although the Staff Development Plan is region-wide, according to the Program Director, "Alaska may drop out of the Consortium" and has no plans for a summer workshop for ABE teachers. The other states differ from one another in the degree of progress they have made toward the Staff Development goals, and apparently some states are further along in curriculum development than others. Furthermore, in terms of the use of 309 monies, the 4 states differ from one another: at one extreme are Washington and Alaska, and at the other Oregon.

Evaluation: According to the Program Director, they have not yet done very much about evaluating the awareness workshops' process, although they plan to use participants' feedback and ratings--which will be used in the summer workshops.

Evaluation has been built into their programmatic efforts, however, both in terms of pre- and post-assessments in the Learning Package formats, and in the workshops themselves as a topic--content--that participants need to incorporate in their future plans.

Comments: The goal of developing a regional staff of specialists in APL implementation represents a very positive approach. Unfortunately, at present no data was available from the participants at the Regional Workshop in November concerning either how well the workshop format met the goal of preparing staff to be a resource to others or conduct area workshops. The same comments apply to the conduct of area workshops which have, as a goal, the implementation of APL in Adult Education programs on a pilot basis. That is, it is premature to know with any degree of certainty whether the workshop procedure results either in developing adequate curriculum and whether materials are implemented in the classrooms. Furthermore, considering that as yet no APL-related learning packages exist, it might be premature to expect "major installation of APL by September 1976."

The original idea of providing a trained core of specialists and practitioners in implementing new curricular materials and strategies seems to be a very effective concept. However, to use the same delivery system structure for curriculum development may not prove as viable. It is still too early in the process--especially in the absence of curricular materials--to determine.

LEARNING PACKAGE FORMAT

1. Concept Statement
(A brief sentence describing the competency the package teaches.)

2. Rationale
(A paragraph which illustrates how the competency can be useful to the student.)

3. Objective
(A measurable statement which describes the (a) outcomes of learning, (b) criteria for measuring learning success, and (c) conditions and/or materials the student will use to learn by.)

4. Pre-Assessment Instrument
(A diagnosis of the learner's ability to perform the objective.)

5. Learning Activities
(A minimum of five activities which each represent an alternative cognitive style. Each activity is necessary and sufficient to teach the competency.)

6. Self-Test
(A student Self-Test with answers which should measure the same exact competency as the Pre-Assessment.)

7. Post-Assessment
(This assessment should ask the student to demonstrate the same competency as the Pre-Assessment and Self-Test.)

8. Quest Activities
(Additional enrichment learning activities for the student who wants to master the competency at higher levels of skill.)

3/11/76

Competency-Based Adult Education in Oregon - Oregon Department of Education

Primary Classification: APL-Curriculum Development

Secondary Products: a. Adult High School Diploma

b. Computer records of adult education enrollees[1]

Funding History: In Oregon (as in the State of Washington), all adult basic education, general educational development, and adult high school diploma programs are offered by the 13 public community colleges. The adult education programs are all supported by federal monies which go to "pay the tuition to the community colleges who do the adult education."

Philosophy: In Oregon. the community colleges have always (i.e., since the ABE program was first established in 1965, funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity) offered an adult high school diploma which, by law, is based on the requirements for regular high school graduation.

By 1978, according to a 1969 law, Oregon will have new high school graduation requirements which will be competency-based. Since the adult high school requirements must "match" the regular high school graduation requirements, a new approach was called for. By 1978, the person completing the minimum requirements for an Adult High School Diploma must accomplish (a) the 11 units of required credit plus 10 elective units, and (2) the "specific competencies identified as minimum skills for survival...."[2] "The three areas of study...most likely to develop the competencies...are Personal Development Education, Social Responsibility Education, and Career Development Education."[3] These are referred to as the "Performance Requirements."

Materials: "Unipacks," a series of [perhaps] 5x8 index cards, are envisioned. Each of the approximately 400 cards (one for each Northcutt task or "enabling objective") would be developed at the local level. The Learning Package format of the cards would be consistent[4] and would include "a pretest, posttest, and curricular activities. Specifically, each card would list the Knowledge Area, the goal, the objective, the task and instructional materials, and the space for teacher comments."

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[1] On a statewide basis, Oregon maintains a computerized record of every enrollee in their adult education programs, consisting of an I.D. number; the individual history of entry and re-entry with dates, accomplishments, activities undertaken, site of education; and so on.

[2] This has been described as a "middle of the road approach, since it combines APL-type objectives and academic course requirements restated in competency terms."

[3] See the Experience-Based Career Education Model Program, Northwest Lab.

[4] See Learning Package Format, Region X Staff Development Plan Report.

After the initial sets are developed, the state education personnel would "compile the information" in each category, "refine" it, and return "an improved set of cards" to the ABE teachers.

Publisher-Producer: Currently, all materials production will be done locally; no plans exist for commercial packaging of the "Unipacks."

Target Group: Adult Education in Oregon has the Pre-GED, GED, the adult high school diploma, and ESL "levels of preparation." According to the Curriculum Coordinator, the first emphasis should not be at the lowest levels, since most existing work, "including Northcutt's, assumes an approximate 4.0-5.0 reading grade equivalent." According to the Region X Staff Development Program Director, Oregon is planning to "level their curricular efforts to the 8th grade level," since they "must view competency-based adult education in the framework of a high school diploma."

Program Development/Implementation:

With the passage of the law changing high school graduation requirements, the Oregon State Board of Education also established the right of the local boards and community college boards to elect to exceed the minimum requirements in either area (i.e., required and elective units of credit or specific minimum competencies) at local discretion. Although this was an "election," according to the Curriculum Coordinator "everyone is viewing it as a mandate." Moreover, each community college "must establish the procedure for evaluating the adult life experiences in terms of the 21 units of credit and survival competencies."

Every local school district in Oregon, according to the Regional Staff Development Program Director, "has established objectives in the seven areas defined by the State." The Northwest Lab received a grant to study the process by which the local objectives were generated, "since there were so many." According to the Program Director, "Oregon's objectives"--which include career education, health, consumer education, driving, and swimming, etc.--"match up extremely well with Northcutt's."

The Curriculum Coordinator and Basic Education and High School Completion Specialist differ with respect to how they see the establishment of requirements beyond the minimum. The former feels that the "local director of adult education and his staff should choose," and "might suggest a statewide assessment of APL objectives and tasks in order to set the minimum requirements and those above minimal." The Basic Education Specialist, on the other hand, is more amenable to accepting the minimal requirements already established.

Two choices exist with respect to the curriculum development process itself. The first choice involves taking Northcutt's "tasks" (which more or less duplicate his later-developed "enabling objectives") and meshing them with reading and mathematics objectives that have already been established for levels pre-K to GED.[1] Alternatively, Oregon could opt to use the curriculum developed by the Region, by Knowledge Area, as part of the plan.

In either instance, the curriculum would be developed at local levels, with the state department compiling the information, and revising the curricular materials on the basis of teacher feedback.

Use in the Classroom: A complete series of cards or "Unipacks" would be available in each adult education classroom. Once complete, any adult education teacher, even "a part-time volunteer," would be able to "pick a card and conduct the class session."

Program Sites: By the middle of March, three-fifths of the adult education teachers had been "exposed" to the APL study, the change in Oregon's high school graduation requirements, and the need for "materials to teach the tasks." Summer workshops are planned to "provide teachers with curriculum development skills" for implementation of APL-activities by September 1976.

Evaluation: While there are apparently no plans to assess the effectiveness or efficiency of the curriculum development process, evaluation of the instructional materials is being planned. Local ABE teachers, in addition to designing the materials, would be asked to provide feedback information and reactions. According to the Specialist in Basic Education, such things as "student attrition, student achievement, and student evaluation of the curriculum" would be good measures of the instructional materials.

Comments: Some of the potential hazards in the approach of developing curriculum from "the ground up" have been addressed in the Oregon/Region X plan--a common format, as well as a state-level process for review and refinement helps guarantee attainment of standards. Similarly to the other efforts to use local teaching to develop curriculum, however, it is too early to judge the quality of their productions. Moreover, it is difficult to foretell whether the instructional materials do, in fact, become a curriculum in the sense of being sequential, valid, acceptable, and structured. Absent from the discussions we had were activities for students, and the relative amount of stress given to individual vs. group activities.

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[1] See the New Jersey Adult Basic Education Curriculum Guide Report.

APPENDIX I

3/11/76

Oregon Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma - Field Test Model,[1] Oregon State Board of Education

Primary Classification: Management and Credentialling System

Secondary Products: A Policy Statement issued by the Oregon State Board of Education (dated 9-17-69) stated that after 1978 an adult seeking a high school diploma must meet the new Oregon Graduation Requirements.[2]

Funding History: The Oregon State Board of Education, Adult Basic Education Department set aside 309 funds for the development of a model for the new diploma requirements. A 5-person project team, representing four community colleges, designed a Field Test Model during the Summer 1975 with the aid of at least four resource people. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no other designs for alternative models. (See Supplementary statement.)

Philosophy: The development of survival competencies is seen as one of the primary tasks of schools in Oregon. Reflecting that view, between 1969 and September 1972 a new set of Minimum State Requirements were proposed, designed, and adopted for graduation from high school: starting in September 1974, high school freshmen entered a new program of competency-based instruction.

Since the community colleges in Oregon had been offering an adult high school diploma, the effect of the new policy was that the adult high school diploma reflect the same requirements for graduation, with an emphasis that: "the adult high school diploma [be] primarily based upon knowledge, competence, and life experiences rather than the typical Carnegie unit of credit."

Materials: The Oregon Administration Regulations, OAR 22-115, and the report entitled, Oregon Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma, Field Test Model, January 1976, are the materials used in this report to specify the minimum high school graduation requirements and the design of an adult assessment procedure.

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[1] The model described in this report was intended to aid Oregon's community colleges in developing a design to reinforce performance, competencies, and life experiences of adults. It should be noted that this model is by no means the one that will be adopted by all, or any of the 13 community colleges.

[2] These new requirements, proposed for students in regular high school, are also to be applicable to adults, since the high school diplomas awarded by the community colleges and the high schools must be in accord.

Although no special curricular materials are discussed in the regulations or in the report, from our visits we learned that the community colleges will be responsible for providing learning activities to satisfy the new requirements, and that they are actively engaged in the development of APL-related curriculum. (See our "Competency-Based Adult Education" Oregon, and the Northwest Regional Lab report, "Region X AE Staff Development.")

Publisher-Producer: Not applicable.

Target Group: Adult Education in Oregon is offered by the 13 community colleges; in addition to ABE and GED programs, the community colleges offer an adult high school diploma. In the 1972-73 school year (the latest date that was available to us), 735 adult high school diplomas were issued.

As far as we can determine, the adult high school diploma is available to the over-16-year-old population, who are not presently in school and have less than a high school education. We have no other information describing the requirements for enrolling in the adult high school diploma (as opposed to, for example, the GED) program, aside from such statements as: "we must assume that the adult population enrolling in a high school diploma program is ready or nearly ready to perform competencies at the high school level" and, "these basics [reading and computation of whole numbers] are already part of the adults' experience and competency."

Program Development/Implementation: According to Oregon's Coordinator of Instruction and Student Services, the 1969 policy statement established that Oregon's community colleges' adult high school diploma conforms to the new minimum requirements as the regular high school diploma.

The new requirements, both for a high school diploma and an adult high school diploma, are competency-based and to be viewed as minimum requirements,[1] with each local district establishing supplementary requirements. These requirements state that the person "completing the Adult High School Diploma requirements must accomplish 11 units of required credit plus 10 elective units of credit [for a total of 21 credits] and the specific competencies identified as minimum skills for survival in our complex society." (There is an alternative for students merely satisfying the minimal survival competencies. They can be granted a certificate of competency--not a diploma--by the high school or community college, if the latter elects to do so.)

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[1] According to the State Coordinator of Curriculum, the local level perceives the minimum requirements as "mandates," despite the fact that the State and Regional levels view them as "suggested minimums."

The 11 required units of credit[1] include 3 for "communications," and 1 each for social science, citizenship, health education, physical education, laboratory science, mathematics, personal finance, and career education. The specific survival competencies are divided into three areas: personal development, social responsibility, and career development.

Each community college must establish the procedure for granting the 21 units of credit and specific survival competencies. The Field Test Model 76 is one attempt to specify how credits can be earned and assessed, and how competencies can be described and demonstrated. According to the authors, this particular model may be used as is, or adapted, or replaced by another model.[2] Although the new high school graduation requirements mandate both units of credit [21] and survival competencies, the regulations provide "little guidance concerning the relationship between these two components." As a matter of fact, the Director of Adult Education at the Northwest Regional Lab, among other people, indicated that this particular model represents a "middle-of-the-road viewpoint since it combines APL-like objectives and academic course requirements."

Units of credit. The 21 credits can be granted after assessment, "for experience gained both in and outside the regular school setting." Central to the assessment process will be the establishment of these credits "by education, by examination, by experience and maturity, and by other means." The assessment procedure is to be flexible enough to enable an adult to demonstrate his competence (based on past experiences) and at the same time, to prepare an appropriate education plan to acquire new learnings. The appended "Competency Assessment Activity" summarizes the various assessment procedures for the 21 units of credit (including both required and electives); it is obvious that these credits can be attained in a number of ways. According to the report, however, "there can be no strict rule for directly equating life experiences and units of credit. As a general guide, it is suggested that a high school unit of credit approximates 130 class hours. Every community college can elect a conversion ratio; many prefer a ratio of six college term hours because of the outside work required in many of the...courses," while other colleges require nine college term hours.

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[1] Adult High School credit "should approximate the high school equivalents." Colleges have an option, however, and have established individual equivalent formulas.

[2] Whatever the final local plan, it is the responsibility of the local college board to submit it to the State Department of Education for approval for granting the Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma.

Competencies. The competencies and their performance indicators "are quite straight-forward in...clearly enumerating what must be done and the criteria for accomplishment of the required competencies." A list of the suggested competencies in the 3 areas of Personal Development, Social Responsibility, and Career Development is appended. For Personal Development Education, "to survive and grow as an individual," it is necessary to: "communicate using basic skills in reading, writing, etc.; compute using basic processes with accuracy; understand scientific and technological processes; and develop and maintain a healthy mind and body." Good citizenship (Social Responsibility Education) means the ability to behave responsibly "as a participant in [all levels of] government; in personal interaction with the environment; on the streets and highways; and as a consumer of goods and services." To survive and advance in any career area (Career Development Education), adults must have "good work habits; positive attitudes toward work; maintain good interpersonal relationships; make appropriate career decisions; and have entry-level skills."

Each of these competencies is spelled out in detail in the Field Model Report and from one to five performance indicators (for each) are listed in the publication. As an example, examine 1.1.5 "Communicate Orally" (under Personal Development). The competency is "communicate information clearly on a given subject or subject of choice." The performance indicator(s) state: "given a choice, [the adult] will perform one of the following: 1. give specific and concise directions to a locality within the student's county of residence [or] 2. give detailed but concise directions on how to make or do something of particular interest to the student."

Use in the classroom. An "Assessment Center, a counseling or registrar function,...and a Learning Lab" might be utilized to: assess school and life experiences in terms of units of credit; assess life experience and current performance in terms of competencies required for graduation (survival plus local requirements); and assist and advise adult learners through planned programs, courses, and/or learning experiences necessary to meet the Competency-Based Requirement for the Adult High School Diploma. In addition to developmental classes and/or courses, there should be a variety of small group activities, individualized guidance, mini-classes, and so on. Several competencies or goals can be embedded in any one of these learning situations.

Personnel. According to the report, "Program staff, the registrar, and/ or educational counselor can perform or verify the assessment. Possible "evaluators who could certify competencies in their particular area of expertise" are: employers (job skills and career development requirements), state employment office (job interviews, job seeking, civil service exams, etc.), county extension (consumer and nutritional performance indicators), and the Department of Environmental Control. At times, it is suggested that the adult learner may be guided into regular college classes, although "this instructional aspect must be a decision of each community college."

Program Sites: The Adult High School Diploma is currently awarded by each of the 13 community colleges in Oregon. They will continue to issue the new Competency-Based Diploma.

It should be noted that each local community college board has been encouraged to exceed the minimum requirements at their own discretion. The Field Test Model plan describes the minimum survival skills as the authors interpret the regulations. The college district must identify the goals, competencies, performance indicators, and assessment procedures it requires.

Evaluation: Not applicable.

Comments: There is some vagueness with respect to the interweaving of Oregon's curriculum development thrust and their Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma. That is, according to information obtained through site visits, we were informed that all APL-related curriculum will be developed locally, but refined and returned to the ABE teachers for use at the community colleges. Since the local districts are to develop requirements above the set minimum, there is a distinct possibility that a large range of requirements will be generated; to accord with the curriculum thrust, a large amount of curricular materials needs to be developed. While the Region X plan provides for a common format, and for the materials development process, considerably less attention seems to have been paid to classroom use, teaching strategies, and the relationship between the Adult High School Diploma and other adult education programs.

In the Field Model Report 76 design, several assumptions are made that need additional clarification. For example, it is assumed that the target population for the Adult High School Diploma program is, at entry, to be functioning at a fairly high level of skill. Yet, to the best of our knowledge, no placement test(s) or diagnostic techniques are discussed; moreover, it is not possible to differentiate, on the basis of what we heard or read, the GED candidate from the High School Diploma candidate.

The Model proposed in this report is primarily one which defines programmatic goals, specifies minimum competencies, and describes performance indicators. While it does this adequately, it does not address the general principles and underlying approach to defining other-than-minimum requirements. Nor does it help others with developing other performance indicators.

Finally, it should be noted that the competencies proposed in this Field Test Model differ quantitatively from other APL-related objectives. Those that are proposed appear to be much more academic--e.g., compute fractions, compute decimals, and "identify the relationships between the living and non-living world"[1]--and much more heavily loaded on reading, computing, and communications skills.

Supplement: The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory has established an office in Salem,[2] Oregon to coordinate activities of the "Oregon Competencies Program."

The Oregon Competencies Program was begun in November 1975 to assist the local school districts in implementing the new competency-based high school requirements. The Program is a 5-year research and development effort, in which the program staff [of NWREL] assists Oregon school districts to:

- implement the new competency-based system;
- disseminate information to other state and local school systems;
- analyze how implementation of the new requirements affect school organization and decision-making;
- track the effects of the new requirements on students; and
- coordinate activities with the Oregon State Department of Education, schools, universities, and other agencies.

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[1] That is, organic and inorganic substances.

[2] NWREL Program Director Walter Hathaway.

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

CREDIT BY EDUCATION

High School transcript

Previous college/proprietary school courses

Present college course work

Adult enrichment/community education

Independent study

CETA, Job Corps, WIN, Manpower Training, etc.

Military training education

Other educational activities

CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

GED, CLEP, CEEB Advanced Placement

Course challenge

Other achievement tests, SAT, TABE, etc.

Course waiver (i.e. physical impairment)

CREDIT BY EXPERIENCE & MATURITY

Job skills and work -- paid and unpaid

Volunteer activities

Home and family

Community service

Travel

Avocational and hobby skills

COMPETENCY CENTER/LEARNING LAB

Performance demonstrations

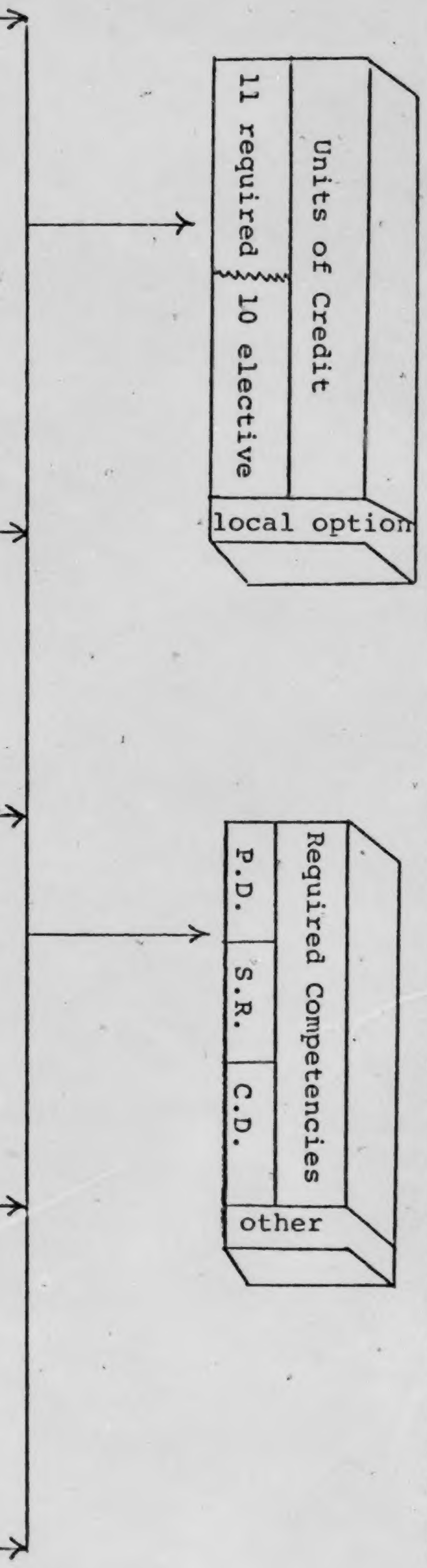
Developmental classes

Mini-courses especially designed

Tutorial assistance

Other instructional assistance

CREDIT BY OTHER MEANS



COMPETENCY BASED ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PERMANENT RECORD

COMPETENCIES

RSONAL DEVELOPMENT

.1 Response to Oral Directions
.2 Interpret Oral Presentations
.3 Analyze What is Heard
.4 Ask/Answer Logical Questions
1.5 Communicate Orally
1.6 Read Newspaper Level
1.7 Library & Resources
1.8 Written Communication
.1.9 Interpret Written/Visual Comm.
.2.1 Computing Fractions
1.2.2 Computing Decimals
1.2.3 Estimate and Average
1.2.4 Computing Percent
1.2.5 Applied Measurement
1.2.6 Computing Metric Measurement
1.2.7 Deriving Information - Graphs
.2.8 Using Calculators
1.2.9 Ratio and Proportion
1.3.1 Human Body Organ Systems
1.3.2 Living/Non-Living World
1.3.3 Forms of Energy
1.3.4 Man's Relationship with Earth
1.3.5 Technological Advances
1.4.1 Physical/Mental Health
1.4.2 Self-Concept
1.4.3 Coping with Common Illnesses
1.4.4 Nutrition/Dietary Knowledge
1.4.5 Effects of Drugs
1.4.6 Apply First Aid Techniques
1.4.7 Value of Physical Activity
1.4.8 Leisure-time Needs
1.4.9 Using Community Resources
1.4.10 Safety in the Home/Job

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2.1.1 Basic Rights/Responsibilities
2.1.2 Government Structure
2.1.3 Voting Procedures
2.1.4 Paycheck Deductions/Public Services
2.1.5 Basic Economics
2.1.6 Perform Community Service
2.2.1 Causes/Effects of Pollution
2.2.2 Population Growth on Environment
2.2.3 Solving/Reducing Pollution Problems
2.3.1 Laws/Codes Governing Vehicles
2.3.2 Pedestrian Rights/Responsibilities
2.3.3 Concepts of Defensive Driving
2.3.4 Responses to Emergencies
2.3.5 Laws for Owners, Passengers, etc.
2.3.6 Auto Safety Devices/Systems
2.3.7 Map/Atlas Reading-Interpretation
2.4.1 Budgeting Family Finances
2.4.2 Financial Record Keeping
2.4.3 Value of Insurance Security
2.4.4 Understanding Contracts
2.4.5 Consumer Credit Factors
2.4.6 Consumer Protection
2.4.7 Propaganda Advertising/Purchasing

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 Vocational Testing Services
3.1.2 Identify Career Fields
3.1.3 Personal Educational Program
3.1.4 Career Adjustments
3.2.1 Techniques for Job Prospecting
3.2.2 Sources of Job Information
3.3.1 Employer/Employe Expectations
3.3.2 Safety Practices
3.4.1 Career Readiness

APPENDIX J

3/16/76

Learning Activity Packages (LAPs) - Providence, Rhode Island Adult Basic Education Program

Primary Classification: APL-related Curriculum Development

Secondary Products: None

Funding History: The Providence Adult Basic Education Program has been receiving 309 funds from July 1972 (through U.S.O.E.) through June 1975 to complete Project ERA/COPE[1] and for developing APL-related "Learning Activity Packages" (LAPs). In the 1973-74 year they had, as a primary goal, the incorporation of Northcutt's APL objectives into the regular ABE program. Work on the LAPs began in 1974-75. In 1974-75 10 LAPs were developed for each of Northcutt's six Knowledge Areas (transportation still included as a separate Knowledge Area). As of March 1976, there are 78 LAPs.

Philosophy: Partly as a result of their participation as a test site in all 5 of Northcutt's surveys, and partly as a result of their interest in improving the adult educational environment for non-English speaking people, the Providence Adult Basic Education department developed curricular materials to incorporate the APL Knowledge Areas into their ABE program.

In addition to emphasizing reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, they set out to develop "coping skills" in APL areas. Their philosophy included facing such "critical issues as employment, income distribution, and health care...since 'adaptive' skills may not improve the quality of life in an economy of unemployment."[2] The rationale is that the adult student develops literacy skills by building upon successful learning experience needed for survival and life-coping skills.

It should be noted that neither their general objectives--nor their specific objectives--as outlined in the LAPs match the Northcutt objectives. The LAP objectives appear to be less abstract, very specific and more concrete and behaviorally-oriented.

Materials: The materials consist of 78 Learning Activity Packages--20 to 30 page booklets (see appended list). Currently there are 14 booklets in the area of Community Resources; 17 in the area of Consumer Education; 9 in the area of Occupational Information; 13 in Government and Law; 17 in Health and Safety; and 8 in Transportation.

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[1] Funded by U.S.O.E., Project Enrollment, Retention, Advancement (ERA) evolved COPE, a parent component. Not funded past June 1975, ERA/COPE was largely directed to strengthening the ABE program, increasing the number of ESL participants, and improving their experiences in the Adult Learning Centers.

[2] We were informed that Rhode Island has the highest unemployment rate--16%--in the country.

The format is consistent. On the first page there is a statement of need (e.g., "Non-English speaking adults are generally unaware of the services offered by the typical drugstore"),[1] followed by a general objective ("to enable the adult to have his medical prescriptions filled and to understand the directions. To inform him of the items and services available in his local pharmacy.") The general objective is followed by specific objectives together with teaching strategies (which appear to incorporate basic and other skills practice), materials, and evaluation. (Evaluation is, in part, a statement of student behaviors.)

The following pages consist of the materials and other student exercises, including questions, problems (with pictures and diagrams), and so on.

Each LAP contains at least some of the following student activities: new vocabulary words, writing and reading problems, grammatical exercises, comprehension problems, computational problems, CLOZE problems, map-type problems, and exercises in communication. The LAPs are "leveled"--that is, some are labeled ESL 1 (beginner), ESL 2 (intermediate), ESL 3 (advanced), and ABE/HSE level. Although apparently leveled by English-language ability, what they consider ESL 2 and ESL 3 is comparable to the approximately 4.0 - 8.0 ABE levels of literacy. That is, ESL levels 1-3 are comparable to ABE levels I-III.

There are no teacher manuals and no estimate of the extent to which the LAPs are used in the classroom. Evaluation of student progress is based on teacher judgment.

Publisher-Producer: The Providence Adult Education Department produces (rexograph and mimeograph) copies of the LAPs. They are done in-house by staff of the Providence Adult Education Center. Stapled copies can be purchased for .50/each and bound copies are somewhat more expensive. The State Department of Education has suggested that they find a commercial publisher.

Target Group: The General Knowledge and Skills areas of Northcutt have been designated priority areas in adult classes. The general interest areas [knowledges] are "transmitted to students through communication, interpersonal relations and computerized skills as the medium through which the adult student advances."

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[1] From "At the Drugstore."

The LAP materials can be used with all adults in the learning center, except for those preparing for the GED. According to the Providence Supervisor, those adult students preparing for the GED do not receive instruction in these APL-related areas. For this group (which, incidentally, cannot account for more than 20% of their ABE students), they use standard materials (e.g., Arco, Cambridge series of texts). According to the Supervisor of the Providence program, while it is "true that people preparing for the GED need survival skills, they don't need the same [i.e., LAP-type] survival skills. Although the LAPs afford practice in such things as computation, communication, grammar, spelling and vocabulary--which could help with the GED--the LAPs are not enough to assure passage." According to the Supervisor, "When APL is acceptable as a diploma or certificate-awarding program, then APL materials should be, and will be, used in the classroom."

Program Development/Implementation: The LAP materials were developed using staff hired under 309 in 1974-75. These materials have undergone revisions and modifications based on teachers' feedback and suggestions. The revision and production of these booklets is very tightly supervised by the Providence Adult Education staff.

There has been little monitoring of the extent of use in Adult Education classrooms, although the Providence personnel "would welcome evaluation of all kinds--how much they are used and how good they are."

Student progress in the centers is based on teacher judgments, with one exception: at ABE level II, the APL test is administered to ascertain progress.

No information was available about future plans for the LAPs. For the March 1, 1976 to October 27, 1976 period, the Curriculum Research and Development Center of the University of Rhode Island has received funds from the Rhode Island Department of Education to "research the area of curriculum in R.I. and the U.S. as it applies to the APL study and recommendations.... The product will be a sample curriculum guide...and the development of sample behavioral objectives for each of the APL objectives identified."

Program Sites: The Providence Adult Education program has the LAPs. In addition, they have been widely disseminated (see appended list).

Evaluation: As noted above, little in the way of evaluation of the LAPs has been done. No data exists either about the extent of use, student reactions, nor impact on the adult student learner. However, according to the Supervisor, "Many students have been helped to attain citizenship, register to vote, obtain a driver's license, understand and complete income tax forms, and pass the High School Equivalency Test."

Comments: At the present time, the Learning Activity Packages seem to be one of the very few curricular efforts that have resulted in actual sets of materials for use by the adult student. They have responded, in terms of general content, both to the beliefs that adults need to work with more relevant materials, and to the general areas of need that the Northcutt study popularized. Moreover, the materials respond to the broad differences in ability and skill that are characteristics of the ABE population.

On the other hand, several problem areas exist. The major area of difficulty lies in the difference between the LAP general objectives and Northcutt's 65 objectives. Although there is congruity with respect to the Knowledge Area goals, the issue becomes one of whether different objectives do, in fact, lead to attainment of the same goals.

Although the LAPs do appear to meet the difficulty in integrating APL-type content and objectives with practice in the basic skills areas, there has not been enough attention paid to their arrangement, i.e., to the sequence of use in the classroom or with a student, nor to the problems of assessing student progress or the question of individualized vs. group activities. The LAPs, however, do seem to meet an immediate need for student workbook-type activities.

APPENDIX K

3/22/76

THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL STUDY - University of Texas at Austin

Primary Classification: APL Test Development[1]

Secondary Products: All of the actual and anticipated test instruments are components of the University of Texas APL Management/Instructional System (or curricular effort). As the tests are described below, their place and purpose in the System will be noted.

Funding History: On August 19, 1970 the Director of the Division of Adult Education Programs of USOE sent a memo to chief state school officers inviting proposals to systematically define adult functional literacy. The $175,000 grant was awarded to the Texas Education Agency, effective June 1, 1971. The Texas Education Agency subcontracted the "major portion of the work" to the Division of Extension of the University of Texas at Austin. The project started in September 1971 when a project director was hired. By the end of 1974, all work for this original study was completed.

Subsequently, still working with funds from the Texas Education Agency, the APL project staff undertook curriculum development and the design and implementation of an instructional system.[2] As part of this effort, several test instruments are being considered. According to Northcutt, even the APL test of Adult Functional Competency was a "by-product of the research."

Philosophy: The philosophy underlying the original research defining functional literacy has been stated many times and in many places: to "specify the competencies which are functional to economic and educational success in today's society and to develop devices for assessing those competencies."

In terms of test development philosophy, each APL objective is defined as a competency. To measure how competent adults were, they decided on criterion-referenced testing using performance indicators. Performance indicators, test items,[3] are developed for each objective. According to Northcutt, the performance indicators require the employment of the skills in the General Knowledge area situations.

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[1] In this summary, focus is on the development of the original APL Test, and the other tests instruments that are under construction. This summary, therefore, is not to be viewed as an in-depth analysis of the survey procedures nor does it address the underlying theoretical assumptions and implications of the national study.

[2] The External High School Diploma Pilot Project.

[3] These are items in a non-traditional sense. Theoretically, in these types of measurement (content-referenced and criterion-referenced) situations, the items must reflect the possible pool of problems or items that adequately cover the objective. With specific objectives there are fewer problems: Thus, for example, if the objective is "Add 2-digit numbers," perhaps 12 or so problems would adequately cover the objective and assess the person's ability. However, an objective such as "to know the major events of U.S. history" presents a hypothetical situation in which there would be less consensus on what facts or events would constitute adquate coverage of that objective.

Materials: Four tests, or sets of tests, are being developed--or are available in some state of readiness--to be used in conjunction with the External High School Diploma project. They are: (1) the APL Placement Test (short form) which classifies the person as APL 1 (functionally incompetent), APL 2 (somewhat competent), or APL 3 (functionally competent); (2) the Diagnostic Skills test (or tests) which will assess competency in reading, writing, speaking/listening, etc.); (3) the Diagnostic Objectives Tests, each keyed to one of the 5 General Knowledge areas; (4) the APL posttest or mastery test. Only the first instrument has been completed.

Publisher-Producer: The APL Placement, Short Form test, used in the National Survey, is currently being published by ACT for national distribution by a May 1 target date. According to Northcutt, they are packaging it in 3 formats (see below), and may have added some items.

The other instruments are being developed by the Project Staff from the large pool of items accumulated early in the research project. The primary purpose of these are to define the person's weaknesses down to each objective and/or skill and to assess his mastery at the end of the instructional period. As far as we know, there are no plans for commercial publication of these instruments.

Target Group: Five separate groups were included in the 5 independent national surveys, according to the Project Director.

The initial round of field testing involved approximately 3,500 adults in 30 states.[1] These were all volunteers identified by the State Directors of ABE. The test items were administered in 1973 and 1974 to "nation-wide probability samples, aged 18-65." The mean age was 28.6 and 40.5% were males.

The national assessment was conducted during October 1974 by the Opinion Research Corporation under contract to the University of Texas. They tested approximately 1500 adults, 18-65 years of age in the continental U.S. This assessment is also called the "Composite" Survey, and is described as a representative sample of adults in the continental U.S.

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[1] Another report refers to an N=4015.

Program Development: The first stage of the APL Performance Study was the specification of competencies or objectives, obtained through a literature review, survey of state and federal agencies, conferences on adult needs, and continuing interviews with undereducated and underemployed adults.

Performance indicators were written for each competency and involved the use of communication, computation, problem-solving, and interpersonal relations skills. Initial versions of these indicators were field-tested with 3500 undereducated and underemployed adults in ABE programs in 30 states. (Since that time, according to Northcutt, "several thousand more adults have been tested in a number of states with subsequent versions of the performance indicators.") The major purpose of that phase was to determine whether or not a relationship existed between performance on the test items and the four criteria for success--i.e., occupational prestige, income, educational level, and ABE level.

Northcutt indicated in our discussions that five[1] separate surveys were done: "Survey 1 covered the General Knowledge areas of Health and Community Resources; Survey 2 covered Government and Law; Survey 3, Consumer Economics; and Survey 4 covered Occupational Knowledge. The published reports indicate that the testing may have been by items divided into "3 skill areas (reading, writing, and computation), and that a fourth section of the instrument, composed of General Knowledge areas...completed the test packet." And, "approximately 6,000 item packets were distributed," although "adults taking the tests were not required to complete the entire item packet,"[2] which consisted of approximately 100 exercises. The tests were administered by local site personnel.

By the end of this phase of the study, it was concluded that "this project has defined a system of adult needs and has described an array of behavioral tasks keyed to these needs which, for the most part, can be demonstrated to be positively related to various measures of success in adult life.[3]

The next step in the research was to determine national levels of performance with regard to the objectives. The University of Texas selected 42 items from the earlier testings; these items were "discriminative and assessed four skill areas--reading, writing, computation, and problem-solving." They contracted with the Opinion Research Corporation to act as data collection agent. ORC also "formatted and printed" the field materials. Testing, using a personal interview format, was conducted during the period October 7-26, 1974. All testing was done in the respondents' homes.

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[1] The fifth survey was the Composite Survey.

[2] There is, obviously, some misunderstanding about the first round of testing, both in terms of the nature of the test packet (i.e., Skills or General Knowledge Area booklets) as well as about the number of adults in the sample. (The first report, January 1973, includes an N=4,015, while an undated one describes N=3,500.)

[3] Although, in general, this conclusion obtains from the data, several questions about the research methodology, the presentation of the data, and the interpretation need to be answered.

Using Opinion Research Corporation's Master Sample, testing was conducted with a probability sample of "approximately 1500 adults, representative of the population 18-65 years of age in the U.S., excluding Alaska and Hawaii."

The 42 items[1] were selected from the earlier tests and are described as a composite of the 6 [Knowledge] areas. The average length of administration was approximately one hour.[2] According to Northcutt, this version of the instrument is a "possible prototype for a future mass-produced, group-administered adult functional competency test. An "experimental version" of this test is to be published by ACT on or about May 1. This instrument is variously called the ACT test of APL, the APL short-form test, the APL test of functional competency, and the APL test. The items were chosen to "predict" functional competency in terms of formal education, family income, and job status. It was determined, for each item, the probability with which people of varying competencies answered. These levels of competencies are called APL 1, 2, and 3. For each respondent, the overall APL level was determined by examining the probabilities for each question using Bayesian statistics.

The experimental version of this test that we saw at the University of Texas contained 73 items.[3] According to Northcutt, there will be 3 formats available: (1) the interview format, which was the form the national survey took; (2) a format where the examinee reads the question and writes the answer directly into the booklet; and (3) and a format where the examinee reads the question and answers a separate answer sheet.

The items are sized to real life--i.e., a bulletin board notice is in larger type than a newspaper want ad. According to Northcutt, this test covers all Knowledge areas and all Skills with the exception of interpersonal relations. The test, however, does not test each objective.

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[1] The 42 items yield 67 scores; for example, the "addressing an envelope item" is given a score for the correctness of the addressee and for the return address.

[2] This was an untimed test.

[3] Northcutt did not know why the ACT experimental version has 73 questions.

In the classroom[1] the test can be scored by counting the number of correct responses that define the cut-off points for APL 1, 2, and 3. According to Northcutt, the best use of this test is diagnostically. After the client is given the test, the results are used to score him as an APL level 1, 2, or 3. A profile is generated, since the individual can score at different levels of competency on the different items. That is, a person can be at APL 3 in Health and be an APL 1 in Occupational Knowledge; likewise, he can score differentially on the skills involved.

The intended plan is then to give the individual a "diagnostic objectives" test for each (5) Knowledge area, and a diagnostic skills test, based on his identified weaknesses.

The diagnostic skills test, according to Northcutt, will not be related to content, but will be used to place the person at the appropriate skills level in the curriculum module. That is, this instrument will place the person at the correct level of the enabling objectives on each Scope and Sequence Chart. If the person, however, has very low level skills, he will be placed in the low level skills development materials, or the one also referred to as the "ESL" or vocabulary module. The diagnostic skills test is not complete. According to the External High School Diploma report, if the client scores at APL level 3 on the short form. he is then given the diagnostic skills test; if he scores at the advanced level on the diagnostic skills test, he goes right on to the two-pronged assessment of Generalized and Individualized Competencies.[2]

As far as we can determine, the diagnostic objectives tests are also not complete. They are described as being longer and, when ready, will be "diagnostic down to the objectives level." That is, if there are 13 objectives in the Health area, the Health Diagnostic Objectives test will test all 13 objectives. As indicated, 5 such tests are planned. They will be used "prescriptively." That is, after the person is diagnosed on the APL test and the Diagnostic Skills, they will take the diagnostic objectives test and then be given the instructional materials as needed.[3]

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[1] This test is being used in the Texas External High School Diploma pilot project test sites.

[2] This seemingly contradicts the information on the diagram, appended, and the description of the process.

[3] We are not certain when a person has to take all 5 objectives tests or only those on which he scores less than APL level 3.

Thus, only after a profile is generated (a diagnostic use of the APL short form) and a prescription is developed (based on performance on the Diagnostic Skills test and the Diagnostic Objectives test), is the learner ready for instructional materials. A diagram of this process is found on page 8.

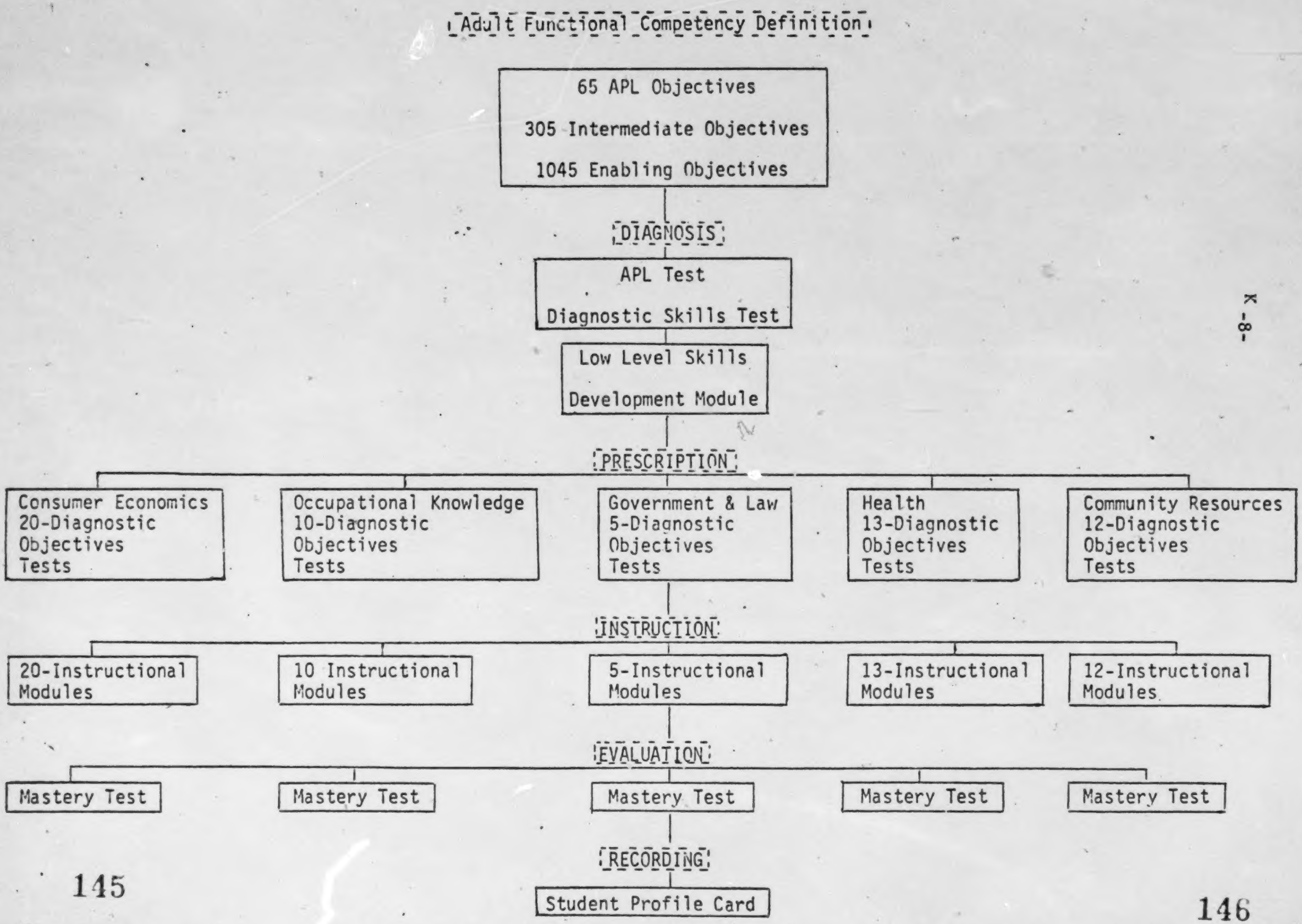
The final set of tests are described as "Mastery tests" or, alternatively as posttests. In the TEA External High School Diploma report, these 5 tests, one keyed to each Knowledge area, are administered by the Learning Consultant, when the teacher feels that the student has mastered all objectives. If he passes the posttest, he is ready to progress to the final evaluation of Generalized and Individualized Competencies. (If he fails the posttest, "he is channeled into additional learning activities.") It is unclear how the Mastery tests differ, if indeed they do, from the Diagnostic Objectives tests.

According to Northcutt, the research preceding the National (Composite) Survey yielded a large pool of items. These items are used to develop all the diagnostic tests.

Program Sites: With the exception of the ACT APL Test (short form), the other instruments were designed for use with the Northcutt APL curriculum. Although these tests are not completed, it seems fair to say that they could be used in those sites implementing that curriculum. Currently that curriculum (or parts thereof) are being used only--as far as we know--in the 7 or 8 sites in Texas that are piloting the External High School Diploma project. Future plans call for use of the curricular modules without the awarding of the diploma; it is most probable that the instruments can be used there as well.

Evaluation and Comments: Northcutt has not provided any data evaluating the tests, beyond describing certain aspects of the reliability and validity of the APL test (short form), the sample design, and a description of the field procedures. There are, apparently, very few problems with the field procedures or sampling. More questions arise with respect to the interpretation of the results. For example, in examining the national findings in terms of level of education, the following is noted: "For level of education, the percentage of APL 1's rises steadily from about 2% for college graduates to about 85% for adults with less than 4 years of formal schooling." As a matter of fact, "completion of high school" results in the following distribution: APL 1 = 11%, APL 2 = 37%, and APL 3 = 52%. That is, more than half the high school graduates were defined as "functionally competent" with another 37% as "somewhat competent." The important implication is that traditional high school experience (including GED training) does lead to generally competent functioning. To institute a new APL-related curriculum, especially as a substitute for the more traditional one, seems to need to be carefully targeted at the 11% APL 1's; traditional schooling using traditional instructional materials and activities seems to suffice for most of the population. This comment, of course, reflects our bias that there always will be a proportion of adults who are not competent: To expect each and every adult in the United States to function at the same level of competency as each and every other adult (APL 3) does not seem reasonable. We do believe that the new APL-related emphasis will result in a somewhat smaller proportion of APL 1's. Other people must make the determination of whether this anticipated shift from APL 1 to APL 2 or 3 is worth the expenditure.

COMPONENTS OF AN ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL MANAGEMENT/INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM


Adult Functional Competency Definition
65 APL Objectives
305 Intermediate Objectives
1045 Enabling Objectives
DIAGNOSIS
APL Test
Diagnostic Skills Test
Low Level Skills
Development Module
PRESCRIPTION
Consumer Economics 20-Diagnostic Objectives Tests
Occupational Knowledge 10-Diagnostic Objectives Tests
Government & Law 5-Diagnostic Objectives Tests
Health 13-Diagnostic Objectives Tests
Community Resources 12-Diagnostic Objectives Tests
INSTRUCTION
20-Instructional Modules
10 Instructional Modules
5-Instructional Modules
13-Instructional Modules
12-Instructional Modules
EVALUATION
Mastery Test
Mastery Test
Mastery Test
Mastery Test
Mastery Test
RECORDING
Student Profile Card

APPENDIX L

3/22/76

ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL CURRICULUM - University of Texas at Austin

Primary Classification: APL Curriculum Development

Secondary Products:

a. The ABC's of APL: An Annotated Bibliography of Materials Related to the APL General Knowledge Areas[1]

b. APL-related tests[2]

Funding History: Sometime between the completion of the field validation study (December 1972) and July of 1975, Northcutt's team at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin began their involvement with resource materials and other curricula designed to teach the skills and knowledge identified as necessary for functional competency. In FY 1975, the Texas Education Agency subcontracted a project to the University of Texas to develop curriculum using ABE teachers. According to a Texas Education Agency representative, this effort was a "98% failure." For FY 1976, University staff is developing curricula, using workshops to obtain teacher input.

Philosophy: Northcutt's research identified elements of adult functional literacy, and furthermore, revealed large proportions of adults who did not possess these competencies. From a logical point of view, it seemed a necessary next step to provide instructional materials that would teach these competencies. Despite the fact that Northcutt is a researcher, his team responded to the expressed needs for learning activities.

The feeling of the project staff is that "adults learn best when skills are taught in a problem-centered atmosphere which is relevant to everyday experiences." This, couple with the staff's evident concern for structure, seems to have shaped the curriculum efforts.

Materials: To date, teachers have (in addition to what already exists in the classroom) 3 sources of instructional materials:

a. The Scope and Sequence Charts. One chart exists for each APL objective.

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[1] The bibliography was designed to assist ABE teachers select materials which relate to the APL objectives. Organized by Knowledge area, this book contains materials for the 65 objectives necessary for functional literacy. Within objectives the materials are arranged by "readability levels as related to ABE," with additional ESL materials and teacher resources.

[2] In addition to the APL Short Form test (the general APL national survey, modified and soon to be published by ACT), several other tests are being developed: The Diagnostic Skills Tests, the (5) Diagnostic Objectives Test and the Mastery or Posttest(s). For a more detailed account, see the summary of APL tests.

They are arranged in five volumes--one for each general knowledge area. Each chart has the APL objective written out on the top of the page, and indications of the learner's path through certain subordinate attainments to final mastery of the objective. These charts are explained in more detail (below).

b. The ABC's... APL has been taught in Texas since July of 1975,[1] and some type of teacher resource was needed until the APL curriculum was completed. The ABC's of APL: An Annotated Bibliography of Materials Related to the Adult Performance Level General Knowledge Areas serves to refer the teacher to materials keyed to each APL objective. The materials are also classified according to ABE level so that a teacher can pick out the most appropriate materials given the skills level of a student.

c. Curriculum Modules. There are 7 modules at the present time. There will be one module for each APL objective, so eventually there will be 65.[2] The seven developed so far are all in the general knowledge area of Consumer Economics. A module contains a scope and sequence chart for that objective; a diagnostic APL objective test; lists of behavioral objectives; teaching activities; and envelopes containing teaching student materials developed by UT staff.

Producer-Publisher: The APL curriculum is being developed at the University of Texas at Austin, Division of Extension, under the supervision of Dr. Northcutt. There are no plans for commercial packaging to the best of our knowledge, but the format (the box) suggests that some consideration will be given to this aspect.

Target Group: Although those involved with the APL curriculum development are reluctant to specify any skills or grade equivalent prerequisites on the part of students, Northcutt did say, when pressed, that the entry level of the curriculum modules requires some limited sight vocabulary, plus some ability to add, subtract, and multiply. Again when pressed, he gave a 2.0 grade level estimate as probably the minimum necessary for comprehending the materials.

It should be noted that the vocabulary objectivesfor each Knowledge area are being treated together as a pre-APL or ESL package. These, it is said, assume virtually nothing in terms of the learner's prior skills. Thus, when complete, the curriculum should span ESL and beginning ABE through APL level 3

Comparing the stated prerequisites for the APL curriculumwith those stated for other APL-related curricula, Northcutt's requires substantially less. Of course, it must be remembered that his curriculum is not far enough along in development, nor is there any data presented to substantiate how students at different skills levels work through the curriculum.

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[1] See summary of External High School Degree Program, Texas Education Agency.

[2] Possibly only 60, as the 5 objectives dealing with vocabulary (one in each of the Knowledge areas) are being removed and combined into a pre-APL package.

Program Development/Implementation: The curriculum builds on the 65 objectives which resulted from the original work of the APL project. These objectives were derived from a process of consultations with unemployed adults, large employers, employment agencies, and social service agencies, and were eventually refined and classified.

In some sense the curriculum development started with the APL Model of Functional Competencies, which is the now-famous-matrix of General Knowledge Areas (content) and Basic Literacy Skills and the the list of 65 objectives.

According to Northcutt, the "APL objectives form the core around which ABE curricula may be constructed." Since "much curricular development work in ABE is conducted at the local level...the forms which these curricula might take could, and probably will, be quite varied in order to meet local requirements."

For Northcutt's curricular development effort, the objectives were "the fundamental building blocks...." As of March 1975, each objective, in turn, was described by a series of situation-specific requirements called tasks. Mastery of an objective was to be manifested by "...ability to perform a group of tasks--to respond appropriately to specific situations which reflect the requirements of the objective." According to Northcutt, the "tasks were designed originally to suggest classroom activities."

With the dissemination of the March 1975 Summary Report, Adult Functional Competency: A Summary, Northcutt included the following caveat: When attempting to translate the APL description of competency into curriculum, "tasks should be considered as paradigms or general guidelines. They should not be interpreted as being engraved in stone, because it is the objective that is the most important element in the requirements for functional competency."[1]

To summarize: By March 1975, Northcutt had defined five[2] General Knowledge areas (Occupational Knowledge, Consumer Economics, Health, Community Resources, and Government and Law), 6 Skill areas (reading, writing, speaking/listening, computation, problem-solving, and interpersonal relationships), the 65 objectives and approximately 400 tasks, distributed as follows:

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[1] Unfortunately, Northcutt also stated that the tasks describe the objective and that mastery of the objective comes from demonstration that the tasks can be performed. The thinking underlying the reasoning that tasks are changeable without concomitant changes in the objectives creates serious problems.

[2] Transportation had already been subsumed under community resources. According to the San Francisco State University project staff, they are trying to distribute community resources among the other Knowledge areas. That is, they do not feel it should exist as a separate general area, but should be subsumed under the four other ones, as appropriate.

Consumer Economics	Occupational Knowledge	Government & Law	Health	Community Resources
20 Objectives	10 Objectives	6 Objectives	13 Objectives	16 Objectives
115 Tasks	51 Tasks	35 (or 37) Tasks	100 Tasks	54 Tasks

According to Northcutt, the tasks have been replaced with a more elaborate mapping for each objective. As of September 1975, The present scheme has broken each objective down into intermediate and enabling objectives. (Northcutt states that the "tasks are close to the enabling objectives.") As a general rule, an objective has several intermediate objectives, one for each of the six Skills areas. Thus, the intermediate objective for one of the 65 APL objectives could be thought of as which kinds of reading skills (writing skills, speaking/listening skills, computational skills, and so on) are necessary to do the APL objective.

The intermediate objective, "reading" for a specific APLobjective, for example, is composed in turn of a series of enabling objectives. Enabling objectives are successively harder levels (there may be dozens) of the skill, sequenced so that as a student progressed from the very most elementary to the most difficult, he will have accomplished the intermediate objective.[1] A summary of this concept is the "Scope and Sequence Charts." Currently, there is a Scope and Sequence Chart for 60[2] APL objectives. By March 1976, Northcutt's curriculum had the 5 Knowledge Areas, 65 APL Objectives, 305 Intermediate Objectives, 1045 Enabling Objectives , and 7 curricula modules.

The process for developing the Scope and Sequence Chart deserves mention. According to Northcutt, about 75 ABE teachers helped develop the Scope and Sequence Charts in a two-week workshop. First, the intermediate objectives were written and then the lower-order enabling objectives were developed.

The Scope and Sequence Charts cannot yet be considered curriculum but rather a design for a curriculum. Northcutt concurs, and his staff is working on curriculum modules (which will be described below) which contain the behavioral objectives obviously missing from the Scope and Sequence Charts.

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[1] It is not clear whether an individual has to master all the intermediate objectives within an APL Objective to be considered competent as far as that objective is concerned.

[2] The first objective in each of the five Knowledge areas was, according to Northcutt, a vocabulary objective. All the vocabulary objectives are to be repackaged and presented together in one "Scope and Sequence Chart" which can be used "to introduce ESLers into the APL curriculum."

Before describing the next developmental phase, there are important features of the Scope and Sequence Charts which should be noted. Some APL objectives are more heavily loaded on reading (or computational, or other skills) intermediate objectives than are others; it is entirely possible for, for example, an APL objective to have no (or few) enabling objectives. For example, Health APL Objective 6 concerns child rearing practices for the health and safety of a child: This objective, as seen on the Scope and Sequence Chart, has 5 enabling objectives in the reading intermediate objective, and only 1 enabling objective that comprises the intermediate objective in computation. Thus, it is possible to use this curriculum design to teach a skill (without focusing on content) by selecting a Scope and Sequence Chart that has an emphasis on enabling skills of a specific kind.

The University of Texas staff has been working for the past four or so months on developing curriculum modules. There will be one module for each APL objective. By the time of the site visit, seven out of the total number had been developed. They are all in the areas of consumer economics and are being used in the ABE sites offering the External High School Diploma. They plan to conduct workshops in June in which 35-40 ABE teachers, experienced with the APL-related External High School Diploma project, will help develop the remaining modules. A short workshop in April 1976 was to be used to train these teachers how to develop a module[1] and to collect feedback on their experiences with the 7 that have been developed.

Each module is packaged in a separate box. There are Teaching Guides and Materials' Folders with, according to Northcutt, "more teaching materials than are necessary so that all potential situations can be covered." Included in the Teaching Guide envelope is a Scope and Sequence Chart, a "criterion-referenced test," and for each enabling objective a list of skills, teaching resource materials, and teaching strategies including, for example, whether an activity is best taught in a group or individually. There are also sets of student tasks and materials in the module package.

It should be noted that since APL is being taught at the Texas External High School Diploma sites, and considering the very incomplete state of the curriculum, teachers must rely very heavily on materials, resources, and strategies that are available in other forms and from other places. As an interim measure, we were told that they are using The ABC's of APL: An Annot graphy... to locate the most appropriate materials for teaching a given objective to a given student.

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[1] A training manual for the conduct of these workshops is available, although a copy was not provided.

Program Sites: "APL curriculum" is being tried out at the seven (or eight) Adult Education sites conducting the External High School Degree program. It is expected that next year the curriculum will expand to 5-8 additional sites, which may or may not offer the External High School Diploma as well.

Evaluation: The curriculum is in very early stages, and thus little can be expected by way of evaluation. It is important to note that the curriculum modules are constantly being tried out and modified, instead of being developed with little input during the development process. Additional feedback, which should lead to revision, is expected from the workshops this spring and summer at which teachers who have been involved with APL will meet with project staff.

Feedback, whether in the form of staff opinions and/or student reactions, is only one form that evaluation of curriculum development efforts can take. More importantly, perhaps, is whether or not the curriculum produces the kinds of changes in student knowledges, attitudes, or behaviors that is desired. At this point in time no data

That is, there is no information on how well, how fast, or how many of the APL objectives are mastered as a result of progress through the curriculum. There is not, moreover, to our knowledge, an analysis of the validity of the relationship between the APL objective and the intermediate objectives, nor between the enabling objectives and the intermediate objectives. Finally, and in the long run, the objectives themselves must be reexamined.

Comments: This curriculum effort is a structured attempt to design a set of learning materials and activities that seem to be responsive to "real" needs as defined by the APL objectives. The hierarchy and sequencing of skills is addressed and attempts are made for individualized ability, both in terms of entry and progression through the design.

As far as we know, however, based on Northcutt's description of the process by which enabling and intermediate objectives were generated, there has been little attention paid to such questions as the validity of the sequencing. For example, have the critical enabling and intermediate objectives been identified; can a person demonstrate competency at the intermediate objective level without being able to perform each and every of the enabling objectives. The Northcutt curriculum design is very elaborate, non-simplistic, and costly in terms of time and effort to develop. Thus, it becomes even more crucial to test some of the linkages on which the structure is based.

APPENDIX M

3/23/76

THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA[1] - Texas Education Agency and the University of Texas at Austin

Primary Classification: APL Certification Model, Competency-Based High School Diploma.

Secondary Products: APL Curriculum Modules; APL placement test (short form), diagnostic skills test, diagnostic APL-objectives tests, and APL posttest; APL Generalized Life Skills Competencies.[2] In addition, there is "a large administrative manual" for site personnel.

Funding History: The "catalyst for the idea of an external high school diploma" was a presentation by Ruth Nickse at a meeting in Texas in March 1975. Under a grant from the TEA (more likely than not with funds in addition to the initial grant for the study defining adult literacy), Norvell Northcutt and his associates undertook the design and implementation of an external degree program in which the adult learner is awarded a regular high school diploma by demonstrating competencies.

Philosophy: According to the University of Texas report, the adult learner needs to "see the value of remaining in and completing an adult education program". "...Such value could be in the form of a regular high school diploma... demonstrating competencies offered through life-skills oriented adult education classes...in combination with competencies gained through experience."

The External High School Diploma was felt to be "a workable, goal-oriented program in which an adult student could be interested and enthusiastic." The important elements include expressing "diploma goals as competency outcomes which are demonstrated as observed behavior ; assessment procedures combining flexibility and credibility ; a combination of minimum generalized objectives ; and individualized options."

Similar to the Nickse program, the Texas External High School Diploma project--unlike the MAECOM Pilot Project and Oregon's proposed project--does not reflect a current or anticipated change in the regular high school diploma offered at the regular high school.[1]

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[1] According to the representative from the Texas Education Association, Adult Education teachers felt "this name was a misnomer...and changed it to the Competency-Based High School Diploma."

[2] These Generalized Life Skills Competencies are, according to the TEA representative, "the same as Ruth Nickse's."

The external diploma is to be awarded when the learner has an overall proficiency equal to APL Level 3, demonstrates proficiency in Generalized Life Skills Competencies, and is proficient in one of the Individualized areas. Although, according to Northcutt, the Generalized Life Skills Competencies can be "keyed to the APL objectives," he indicated that these give the adult the "opportunity to demonstrate in real-life situations" how well he can perform--especially in "problem-solving and interpersonal relationships which are hard to test with paper and pencil."[2]

The diploma that will be awarded to the first graduates expected in May or June 1976 is "indistinguishable from the regular high school diploma, but the followup records will be different."[3] This diploma will be awarded by the local school boards[4] who will vote, annually, to award this diploma and waive the regular requirements. According to the TEA representative, "some schools voted it down," choosing not to participate.

Materials: The materials used in this pilot project are listed under "Secondary Products," and will be described in this section. More detailed information will be contained in the reports of Northcutt's Research Study and the Northcutt APL-curriculum.

Several tests are to be used at specified points in a client's progress through the competency-based model. Only one, the APL Placement, or Short Form test, currently exists; all others are under development.

Unlike the Nickse model, learning activities are part of the Texas project. These activities are designed around teaching APL objectives. They intend to have one complete module for each of 60 objectives;[5] currently, 7 consumer economics objectives modules exist. The teacher or resource person must rely on either The ABC's of APL..., a bibliographic listing of resource materials, or on the enabling objectives in the "Scope and Sequence" charts, or on her own improvisation or adaptations.

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[1] According to the TEA representative, "they have no plans to make the regular high school diploma competency-based. Rather, at the state level, they have been discussing ways to make the regular high school diploma more standard." He also noted, however, that some local school boards are interested in a competency-based high school diploma; he believes their interest to be greater than that of the "professional educator."

[2] Northcutt sees no duplication of effort and believes that "one can be an APL 3 and not be able to do the generalized competencies."

[3] According to the TEA representative, they had not yet formulated a way to summarize or present the transcript data.

[4] All Adult Education in Texas is "done through the local school boards." There are 1120 school districts in Texas, "organized into 52 adult education cooperatives."

[5] There will be no separate modules for objective Number 1, vocabulary, in each of the 5 Knowledge areas.

Publisher-Producer: ACT will publish and market the short form APL Placement test.

University of Texas staff is developing the other tests and curricular modules (with the help of site teachers--see APL Curriculuar Development, Northcutt).

Target Group: Eligibility requirements for participating in the External High School Diploma project are the same as those required of persons seeking the GED: that is, a person has to be "17 years of age or older, with proof of having been out of school at least one year if under 18 years of age."

According to the University of Texas group, those who could "most benefit... are adults who did not finish high school for reasons of being economically disadvantaged and having to drop out of school to work, were confined because of illness or injury during substantial periods of time during their high school career, or were disenchanted with the conventional curriculum or rigid structure of the high school experience." According to both Northcutt and the TEA, a person with a 2.0 grade equivalent has the ability/basis necessary to participate.

However, at the project sites (see below), "student intake procedures vary." For example, at one site we were informed that they just "pulled in people," while at others, "volunteers from among the existing GED population" were recruited. Some sites "take all comers," while others "screen out those that are really ready or close to passing the GED." There are 137 clients in the program," and they have "had fewer than 5 dropouts thus far." One dropped out to take the GED, while the remaining dropped out for personal reasons."

Program Development/Implementation: The Director of Adult Education for the local school district oversees the program. Theoretically, each site should include a "Learning Consultant, a Learning Resource person (teacher), and a Learning Assessor"; the duties of these people are detailed in the report. Although the Learning Consultant and Resource person functions "may or may not be handled by the same person...the functions of the Resource Person and the Learning Assessor [also] may or may not be handled by the same person". It is recommended that the consultant and assessor should be different individuals. In actual practice, however, "there is no full-time assessor who in fact functions at a full-time assessor."[1] The model will be described by tracing progress through the process; again, 3 sources of information will be included.

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[1] At 2 sites, a full-time assessor was assigned, but does "other things as well. In other sites, the "Program Director acts as the assessor." "Many sites have combined the duties of the Consultant and Resource functions."

A potential student coming to the local learning facility is first introduced to the consultant who describes the educational options open to him, and elicits information on his occupational, educational, and personal background and future plans. If he opts for the external diploma, he is given an in-depth orientation and takes the APL test of functional competency.[1] If he scores at APL levels 1 or 2, the Consultant "channels him into learning activities... organized to teach APL objectives, specifically, or APL-related life skills, generally." His strengths and weaknesses are delineated through the administration of "diagnostic tests keyed to each APL objective."[2] The "learning activities will be organized toward teaching the APL objectives."

If, on the other hand, the client scored at the APL level 3 on the Placement Test, he is judged as needing no further work on APL objectives, but is given the diagnostic skills test. If he scores at the advanced level on this, he is "ready to proceed on to the two-pronged assessemnt of Generalized and Individualized competencies. (We assume, although it is far from clear, that if and when an APL level 1 and/or 2 becomes an APL 3 he then, in turn, takes the diagnostic skills test.) According to Northcutt, there is no separate curriculum for skills; rather skill levels are to be built into the curriculum's "Scope and Sequence Charts."

With the help of the Resource person, the client decides which of the failed APL objectives he would like to work on, and in which order. The Resource person also teaches or assigns learning activities,[3] and decides when the client is ready for the next phase. They tend to encourage home study when possible since "most APL is individualized."

When the Resource person feels that the client can pass the APL posttest (or APL Mastery Tests)[4] they are administered by the Learning Consultant. Thus, only after the client passes the APL competency tests[1] or mastery test (posttest) can he continue with the Assessment phase.

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[1] This is also referred to as the "APL placement test" which classifies him as an APL 1, 2, or 3. This short-form, 42-question test will be published by ACT by May 1, 1976. For a description of this and other instruments, see the report on the University of Texas's APL Research Study.

[2] There are, or will be, diagnostic skills tests and diagnostic APL-objective tests. See Northcutt APL Research report for a description of what these tests are intended to measure. At the present time, according to Northcutt, these tests are being developed.

[3] To date, there are only 7 objectives (all in consumer economics) for which curriculum modules are fairly complete. In the absence of materials and activities for the other APL-objectives, teachers are relying on The ABC's of APL, A Bibliography of Materials Related to the APL General Knowledge Areas.

[4] In another place in the report the following statement is made: "APL mastery tests are only required of clients scoring as APL 1's or 2's on the APL competency tests."

The client "is then[2] introduced to the Assessor, who explains this phase and establishes a time frame. The assessment is two-pronged, consisting of Generalized Competencies and Individualized Competencies. The 38 Generalized Life Skills Competencies "cross APL General Knowledge areas and Skills areas" and can be done at home or in the assessment office. The client should not duplicate tasks that have already been accomplished in his progression through the APL learning activities. (See footnote 2, page 2.)

A student must also be able to demonstrate competency in one of the following three Individualized categories: Occupational/Vocational, Advanced Academic, or Advanced Specialized. Occupational/Vocational competency may be demonstrated by employer's testimony (for clients with a minimum of 1 year work experience just prior to the assessment); or performance, assessed by a specialist in the vocational area in which the student wants to be tested; or documentation, such as a union card or state license. According to the representative of the Texas Education Agency, most students choose this area as their area of Individualized competency. Only occupations for which formal training is available can be eligible for assessment.

Advanced Academic competency is intended for students wishing to go on to college. The client must be able to demonstrate evidence of his ability to do college-level work by achieving a minimum score on a college entrance exam. He must also compile a portfolio. This portfolio contains a statement of the student's educational aims along with information about his need for financial aid.

For the Advanced Specialized competency, a student must demonstrate, as judged by specialists, a satisfactory level of achievement in some area chosen by the student. Homemaking, for example, is an acceptable area for demonstrating Advanced Specialized competency.

The clients' portfolio, to serve as a transcript, contains records of the results of all tests; all documentation from the assessor, employer, etc.; and photostatic records of documents. The superintendent of the local school district reviews the portfolio and makes a recommendation for the awarding of the diploma by the local school board.

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[1] We are unsure of whether this means both the Placement Test and/or the Diagnostic Skills Tests.

[2] There is overlap permitted. A person can be accomplishing some of the generalized and/or individualized competencies at the same time he is engaged in APL-objective learning activities. This apparently contradicts the earlier statement which seems to mean that one must be an APL 3 first.

Program Sites: Information about the number and kinds of site (as well as all other data in this site report) comes from 3 sources: the University of Texas group, the TEA, and the Performance Requirements for the APL External High School Diploma Pilot Project Report.

According to the report, "there will be 12 APL External High School Diploma program sites in Texas beginning in October 1975." The TEA representative indicated that, as of the third week in March 1976, 7 sites were operational.[1] On the one hand, some got underway by September 1975 [TEA], and on the other, some started late November and others in early January 1976 [University of Texas]. The sites that were mentioned include: Abilene, Point Isabelle, Pasadena, Huntsville prison, La Vega, El Paso, and Edgewood (San Antonio); a site at an Air Force base was also mentioned,[2] as was Waco.

At each site, the Adult Education program consists of ESL, GED, ABE, and the External Degree program. Next year, they will continue with the same pilot sites, and add 5-8 additional sites [8 more, according to Northcutt]. The new sites will use the APL curriculum, "but not necessarily the external diploma."[3]

Evaluation: Plans for input from staff people and feedback from clients are anticipated. Site visits by project staff are also planned. Followup questionnaires for graduates will be administered. At this point in time, there is very little in the way of evaluative data. The low dropout rate described seems to suggest high retention, but it is too early to tell how many clients remain to complete the diploma requirements. At entrance, according to Northcutt, "about one-fourth of the 137 clients tested at APL level 1, one-fourth at APL level 3, and one-half at APL level 2."

Site staff opinions differ; some sites are "very enthusiastic" and the staff is good. According to the TEA representative, "staff and students feel good about the external high school diploma."

Comments: There are are at least three large problem areas.

Firstly, the program is not far along enough to know enough about its successes. For example, there is not enough data to know the rate or speed with which it takes APL 1's and 2's to achieve an APL 3 level; furthermore, there is little information about how long it takes students to complete the diploma requirements. There are also questions relating to such things as the comparability of the diploma attained via alternate routes within this program.

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[1] The University of Texas people say there are 8 sites using APL and the external degree model.

[2] We do not know if this duplicates the Abilene site or if this is the eighth site.

[3] It should be noted that the APL curriculum is apparently being used only in the external high school diploma project sites.

As with all the external credentialling models, insufficient data exists with respect to the community reaction to and acceptance of these diplomas, and the "success" of the diploma recipients in meeting their other life goals.

The second large area for comment concerns the comparatively large emphasis on individual activities. The APL learning activities are individualized (although "not segregated from ABE activities at the learning center")and the Generalized and Individualized competencies are also all individualized activities. If, indeed, adults need social stimulus and group interaction--as some other projects claim--it does not seem available in this model. Furthermore, if "interpersonal relations" are a basic skill, it is not clear to us how this can be accomplished in this program.

We also find that "the set of requirements" are somewhat vague and even for a competency-based thrust, not well tied or related to pre-existing criteria. There is not yet, as indicated above, enough data to contrast an APL-diploma with a regular or GED one. Furthermore, the relationship between the Generalized Life Skills Competencies and the APL objectives is unclear; we have been informed, on the one hand, that they are not duplicative, and on the other, that they are. We feel that inadequate attention has been paid to this.

Finally, since neither complete sets of test instruments nor curricular materials exist, it may have been premature to mount a program (in as many sites) which seems to rely on these materials for diagnosis and prescription.

APPENDIX N

4/14/76

"Just Around the Corner" - Mississippi Authority for Educational Television (MAETV) and the Mississippi State Department of Education

Primary Classification: APL-Related Curriculum Program

Secondary Products: This has been described as a three component system including a "videotape series, related materials, and utilization." To the best of our knowledge, only the videotapes in the area of consumer economics are available at the present time. (See section on Materials, below.)

The videotapes are "based on the University of Texas Adult Performance Level (APL) Project."

Funding History: The "Just Around the Corner" program, according to the MAETV Utilization Coordinator, was started in 1973 when teachers of adult basic education undertook the development of a new curriculum in consumer economics. With funding from the Mississippi State Department of Education's Continuing Education Division, and with a Community Services Grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the "Just Around the Corner" project was initiated. Fifteen tapes in consumer economics were developed. Funds ran out during this current year, but the MAETV has maintained salary lines until other monies can be found. According to their brochure , MAETV is "seeking [an additional] $1.5 million" to develop and produce the 75 additional programs, 15 in each of the other 4 APL General Knowledge areas.

Philosophy: According to the written description, "Just Around the Corner" is "based on the University of Texas Adult Performance Level Project.... The system is designed to be completely compatible with all state APL-centered programs.... The end product will include a television series covering the APL tasks and objectives in all five content areas, a total system of multi-level related materials, and a comprehensive utilization plan."

The "video component is designed to spark motivation in learners through visual presentation of real-life situations and problem-solving techniques." The purpose, according to the project coordinator, is to "increase academic skills through improved coping skills." The project staff feel, and the general consensus of people at various sites throughout the country is, that the video situational format does indeed convey "basic life-coping skills in a way any adult, regardless of educational level, can grasp."

Materials: At the present time, "Just Around the Corner" consists of 15 fifteen-minute video programs in the area of consumer economics. A list of these programs, including a short synopsis written by the project staff, is appended. The 15 programs, featuring professional actors, follow two families: Joe and Louise Carter, a black couple with two children, and B.J. and Larry Preston, a white newlywed couple. The films are available in color.

In addition to the video program components, we were informed that there is a "Related Materials Component" that includes teacher activities and activities for the learner. The publisher, however (see below), indicated that as of mid-May 1976 "no printed materials are available; there are only some outlines of intended activities." In the brochure, these Related Materials are described as containing a "video guide for using each program...suggesting ways of using everyday events for teaching improved literacy skills...."

The third component is called the "Utilization Component" and is "designed to provide staff development for effective utilization in the classroom, promotional methods with the general public, and recruitment procedures." Although we have requested samples and/or examples of these written materials, we have not received any.

Publisher-Producer: Cambridge Book Company, a New York Times company, will publish, produce, and disseminate the Just Around the Corner program. They have the 15 fifteen-minute color videotapes available and they can "dub them on order." The tapes will be available in four formats: ¾" video cassette; ½" cartridge; ½" reel-to-reel (with either a five-inch or seven-inch diameter); and 2" quadruplex which is appropriate for open telecasting on the public broadcasting system. (The first three formats are for closed-circuit viewing.) Prices will range from approximately $2,250 for the video cassettes to $5,000 for the quadruplex.

According to the Cambridge representative, they are "hoping that the print materials will be available by September." No prices are available since they are still developing a "series of text materials to accompany the tapes."

Target Group: The project representative described the target population as the "Dick Browns"[1] of the country--those with three years or less of formal education--and people in ABE classes. The MAETV brochures describe the target group as "under-educated adults who function at or below the fourth grade level."

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[1] In an APL promotional film, produced by MAETV, Dick Brown is a central character, young, married, working, but not having basic skills in reading, writing, and computing.

Since the video components are clearly designed to motivate and stimulate (that is, they cannot, in and of themselves, instruct the viewer in how-to's), it is our opinion that the range of viewers who could benefit is great.

Program Development/Implementation: A task force of 118 ABE teachers from Mississippi decided what the adult learner needs and what the videos should be like.

The first set of videotapes, according to the Associate Producer, were tried out in Adult Education classrooms as they were being designed. Opinions, reactions, and feedback were obtained from community groups and college students as well as from adult education enrollees. It was concluded, after some modification, that people could relate to the characters in the films.

According to the staff, the 15 tapes "highlight consumer economic objectives, as defined by the Northcutt project team." The MAETV people say that there is not one videotape for each objective, but rather that all consumer economic objectives are covered in the 15 films. The existing tapes, according to the producers, are not sequenced except for Programs #14 and #15 (see p.6), both of which deal with "budgeting." These are the only two segments which are supposed to have an order--the others can be shown in any sequence , and each is supposed to be able to stand alone.

A comparison between Northcutt's 20 Consumer Economics objectives with the synopses of the tapes[1] indicates that, in general, there is a fairly adequate overlap between them. However, certain of Northcutt's objectives seem to be more heavily and more frequently depicted in the videotapes than others: For example, APL CE2 (count and convert coins and weights and measures) receives scanty attention--in Program #5, for example, B.J. "measures Larry's shirt size while he is asleep." Northcutt's sales tax (APL CE3) is not treated in the film, although an entire file (#4) is devoted to income tax.[2] Again, Northcutt APL CE6,"what factors affect cost,"does not receive great attention, nor does CE8, "how goods are packaged," nor does CE20, "limited world resources." On the other hand, money management receives a great deal of attention. Programs #1, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, and 15 focus on problems of buying, budgeting, and borrowing.

MAETV staff intends to develop 4 additional sets of 15 videotapes in the areas of Occupational Knowledge, Health, and Government and Law when funds become available. They will also include other ethnic groups in the new series on response to requests to do so.

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[1] We saw only 4 different tapes.

[2] These comparisons may not be accurate since not all 15 tapes were seen.

Program Sites: According to the MAETV staff, the tapes were aired on public broadcasting in Mississippi for the first time on April 6, 1976, and have (towards the end of April) been put into adult education classrooms "for an evaluation."

The representative from Cambridge Book Company indicated that they have "20 pilot programs [that is, there are 20 adult education sites] to assist Cambridge to develop a series of text materials to accompany the tapes." One of these sites in the Adult Learning Center in White Plains, New York. During the "pilot", the sites will have use of the videotapes and will provide Cambridge with sufficient material to develop the "Related Materials" component.

Evaluation: According to the MAETV staff, a very great effort was made prior to and during the development of the tape series, to secure feedback and reactions--as well as input--from all different populations: adult education enrollees, college students, the public at large, adult education teachers and supervisors in Mississippi, university professors and the Southern Regional Education Board. Most of the effort as it was relayed to us was devoted to questions of now real were the characters and situations, how easy they were to identify with, and so on.

At every site we visited, we heard only good things about these tapes. They are being used for demonstrations, for staff development efforts, and to promote APL curricular efforts.

Comments: We concur with the others who have seen the tapes that, indeed, they are truly spectacular as stimulators and motivators. They are of professional quality, interesting, and very lively.

These tapes are comparable in intent to the first stage of the Adkins Life Skills theoretical model and to the materials developed through the AIM process. Unlike the Adkins materials, however, apparently very little developmental followup activity has been done, either in curriculum or in staff development. The tapes do have, in our opinion, the potential for directing students to such things as skills practice. It is important to keep in mind that they do not seek to be instructional activities themselves, but rather serve an introductory approach. And they are good in making APL-type problems real.

Supplement.[1] In each tape, there is a short (approximately 6-page), mimeographed set of activities, apparently for use by the classroom teacher in conjunction with the videotape. The format is similar, and includes a synopsis of the tape (which, in some instances differ from the synopses of all tapes--compare "Catalog Ordering"), followed by "Content Goals, Skills Goals, and Discussion Questions."

From an examination, the Content Goals appear to reflect the content that can be learned from viewing the tapes. When we examined "Catalog Ordering" and "Selling Techniques" (both of which films were viewed), several disparities emerged, however. For example, from viewing "Selling Techniques," it would not be possible to reach the Content Goal of To Read and Interpret a Sales Contract. Similarly, from viewing the film "Catalog Ordering," one would not be "able to use a catalog for ordering goods."

The Skills Goals imply both learner activities (e.g., reading, writing, computing, discussing, deciding and determining) and resources (such as catalog order forms for each individual, etc.) that the classroom teacher should have. In "Catalog Ordering," many of the resource materials and learner activities are included. In "Selling Techniques" the teacher is told she will "need magazines, newspapers, or other sources of aid," although an audio tape seems to be available.

The activities follow the "Discussion Questions" section. They range from learning to put things in alphabetical order, vocabulary, to writing letters and computing local taxes.

The final section is called "Teaching Activities" and appears to be an amalgam of goal statements, "hints" at teaching strategies, and learner activities.

As they currently stand, these materials are not a "curriculum," and are not complete. They do, however, point out quite clearly that the videotapes do indeed set the stage for a great deal of classroom skills practice opportunity. Perusing the newly acquired materials reinforces our feeling that they are very comparable to the first stage of the Adkins Life Skills stimulus--they are interesting, relevant to the topic, and they allude to the reading, computational, decision-making and other skills on which, we believe, a sequential set of curriculum materials can be derived.

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[1] After the site visit report was completed, sample materials arrived from the MAETV project. There is one set of mimeographed materials corresponding to each of the 15 tapes.

APPENDIX O

4/14/76

ABE/APL TEACHER COMPETENCIES - University of Missouri, Kansas City, Center for Development in Adult Education

Primary Classification: APL Staff Development[1]

Secondary Products: A set of identified competencies "appropriate for ABE teachers who use the APL approach...."

Funding History: In July 1973 Donald W. Mocker initiated a study[2] involving 234 ABE teachers and administrators from 33 states in an effort to "identify, classify, and rank the knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes appropriate for ABE teachers." A list of 291 teacher competencies was generated and ordered in priority; this list was administered in Iowa and again in Puerto Rico. By October 1974, a revised version of the ABE teacher competency inventory was available; it consisted of a listing of 170 "competencies" which can be administered to ABE teachers. By 1976, the investigation of teacher competencies was extended to the "concepts undergirding APL."

Philosophy: Historically, ABE teachers had few guidelines to follow that were specially targeted at training teachers to work with the undereducated adult. Attempts to define what ABE teachers should know, what strategies they should use, and what behavior is critical became increasingly common. Mocker's approach to curriculum for training ABE teachers was to identify ranked knowledges, behaviors, and attitudes; these statements of competencies and their priorities were generated by ABE teachers and administrators in the original study (see above), and "validated" in subsequent ones.

With the national thrust toward APL, and the concentration on developing instructional curricula, Mocker and his associates developed "a base of information regarding the competencies necessary for successful teaching in APL programs...."

Mocker, however, does not necessarily subscribe to the APL objectives: For example, he expressed concern with the "lack of emphasis on the humanities," "the credentialling for functional literacy," and the speed with which APL has been progressing. Nevertheless, within that framework and his own philosophy, he has attempted to develop competencies for ABE/APL teachers.

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[1] The intent of Donald W. Mocker and his associates is to provide a basis of needed, critical competencies for those "persons responsible for staff development at any level."

[2] No information is available describing the source or amount of funding for the initial work. The testing done subsequently was in Iowa, Puerto Rico, and in (1974) the Virgin Islands under a U.S.O.E. grant.

Materials: At the present time, Mocker has an "Adult Basic Education/Adult Performance Level Teacher Competency Inventory" and a report on "A Study to Determine Competencies Needed by ABE/APL Teachers," 1976.

The inventory consists of 186 items, each of which is to be rated on a 0-5 scale from "of no importance to the APL approach" to "critical to the APL approach."

The February 1976 report contains the validation of those items with "11 experienced APL teachers." A copy of the Ranked Table of Competencies, classified in four categories, is appended. The numbers to the left are means based on an "N=11."

Publisher-Producer: This study was conducted by the Center for Resource Development in Adult Education, School of Education, University of Missouri-Kansas City in cooperation with the University of Texas, Adult Performance Level Project.

Target Group: The participants in the study are 11 teachers selected by the University of Texas. According to Mocker, the results of the study have applicability to people at all levels responsible for staff development.

Program Development/Implementation:

Mocker's APL competencies research is based on four premises: that "APL develops from a totally different base than does ABE"; that, "teachers currently teaching in traditional ABE programs...will be expected to teach the new curriculum"; that "nowhere in the field of education is a functional as opposed to academic base the general rule or practice"; and that "the burden of teacher preparation for APL will fall to states and local programs."

The first step was to select a list of competencies to serve as a basis for validation. Using the list of ABE teacher competencies, Mocker had a 6-person jury validate competencies from the ABE list that were within the domain of APL, and identify competencies not on that list. As a last step in this phase, an inventory of the competencies was prepared.

The jury voted that all ABE competencies should be included and that a total of 16 competencies related to APL should be added to the inventory. The omitted ones included such statements as: "understand the background, purpose, and potential of the APL concept"; "provide career counseling and training in occupational knowledge skills"; "understand the importance of learner needs and wants in the planning process"; and "select curriculum which will emphasize the effects of interpersonal relations upon everyday life."

The inventory of 186 items was administered to 11 "experienced and expert ABE/APL teachers...selected by the APL Project" at the University of Texas. Each person independently indicated the degree of importance of each competency.

The 53 competencies (in the top quartile) were ranked on the basis of mean scores and were classified under "Scope and Goals of Adult Education," "Curriculum," "Instructional Process," and "ABE Learner."

Mocker concludes that there are competencies, not required for traditional ABE instruction, that are of major importance for APL instruction. According to Mocker, APL teachers "seem to attach greater importance to community resources and orientation and to problem-solving...for functional curriculum in...occupations, health and nutrition, consumer education and government.... They show less concern for individualization, teacher behavior, classroom management, methodologies, and are somewhat less preoccupied [than ABE teachers] with affective considerations."

Use in Staff Development: According to Mocker, "the results of this study should be interpreted as only giving general direction to staff development and should not be considered absolute criteria...." The data should "help staff developers in making decisions about teacher training."

Mocker indicates that the burden for establishing programs for APL teacher training lies with those who have responsibility for staff development activities. His findings highlight "new staff development needs."

Program Sites: This study was based on the responses of 11 people who, according to Mocker, "can be regarded as experts where few exist nationwide at this point in time." Should funds be available for the future, Mocker will probably seek to revalidate his inventory with a larger number of experienced ABE/APL teachers.

Evaluation: Not relevant.

Comments: Mocker's approach to developing a list of critical teaching competencies is, in our opinion, only one of the methods by which sets of teacher competencies can be generated. His approach tends, in our opinion, to overlook a crucial dimension that should be addressed in a descriptive set of teacher knowledge and behavior--that is, whether or not those teacher attributes are related to change in student performance. In other words, a list of competencies derived from people's statements--even if there is a consensus of belief of importance--does not necessarily relate either to demonstration of these behaviors on the part of the teacher in the classroom nor to effecting student behavior.

The ABE/APL list, which Mocker agrees has its limitations, is even more difficult to relate to behavior. Perusal of the list makes it apparent that the competencies are not stated behaviorally, are not measurable, and are not easily translatable into behaviors or knowledge that can be taught in teacher training efforts. What is reflected in the list is an emphasis on new content areas--the five general knowledge areas and some skill areas. While this study does represent a direction for future staff development work, we feel that in its present form it suffers from several limitations (beyond the fact that it is based on a very small number of subjects), notably on overly generalized language and non-specified behaviors.

On the more positive side, Mocker's research takes a completely different tack than do the other staff development efforts reported on herein. Those other efforts involved staff primarily for the purpose of preparing curricular/instructional materials for classroom use. Mocker and his associates' work is an attempt to redirect the focus to those knowledge, skills, and behaviors that make for a competent teacher of APL.

5/26/76

New York State External High School Diploma Program - Regional Learning Service (RLS) of Central New York[1]

Primary Classification: A model performance assessment procedure for certification of adults at the secondary school level.

Secondary Products: The creation of a new diploma program, the Central New York External High School Diploma (EHSD); the development of a portfolio-type transcript; diagnostic instruments, including a self-assessment checklist, a math diagnostic, and a writing diagnostic[2] instrument; 5 tasks incorporating 64 generalized competencies; and a model for demonstrating individualized competencies in one of three areas.

In addition to two publications--Development of a Performance Assessment System for the Central New York External High School Diploma Program: An Educational Alternative for Adults (Nickse, April 1975), and A Report on Adult Learners (Nickse, January 1976)--the project staff have prepared three manuals. These manuals--I. Task, II. Competency Evaluation, and III. Individualized Competencies Assessment--are designed for staff use and are not available. There is also a Manual for Candidates (in draft) which explains, in detail, the obligations, responsibilities, and expectations for enrollees.

Funding History: The EHSD program was begun in 1973, with the hiring of a project director, although its roots were laid in 1972 by Stephen K. Bailey and the creation of RLS.

The EHSD program was an outgrowth of a study sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education. From April-June 1973, with a planning grant from the New York State Education Department, the guidelines for the EHSD program were developed.

From 1973 to 1975, with funds from both the New York State Education Department and the Ford Foundation, a design group formulated a model for the program.

The program became operational in January 1975 and the first graduation was held on March 11, 1975. By the end of December, 66 adults had earned a diploma.

The New York State Education Department is the primary sponsor, although in the current year, the EHSD program continues to receive some money from the Ford Foundation for dissemination activities, and some indirect support from the Carnegie Foundation who pay the Learning Consultants as employees of RLS.

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[1] A division of the Syracuse University Research Corporation.

[2] These instruments were developed by RLS. In addition, they also use Lichtman's Reading/Everyday Activities in Life, and Holland's Self-Directed Search Inventory.

Philosophy: The EHSD program was conceived as an alternative method whereby "competent" adults could earn a high school diploma. It was based on the belief that there exists a large number of adults who "lack testing confidence, are sensitive to and bored with testing that was not relevant to adult concerns, and were busy managing full-time jobs and families. The challenge was to develop a testing program that would test adults with dignity, and ratify their learnings with a diploma."

Other considerations included the belief that the existing alternatives do not permit adults to demonstrate real-life competencies in practical settings, nor were they reflective of the problems that adults face. The project team feel that the adult should be fully aware of the expectations, the assessment should be self-paced, should be a learning experience, should be humane, and should be related in form and content to adult concerns. Unlike similar programs and more recent developments in adult education in general, the RLS EHSD Program is totally individualized--that is, all activities are done on an individual basis.

Materials: (See Secondary Products.) In addition to their reports, manuals, diagnostic instruments, and assessment tasks, the RLS group has a model step-by-step assessment procedure (page 8), together with fairly completely developed descriptions of staff functions and responsibilities, and standardized procedures for administering and scoring the diagnostic battery and tasks (for the Generalized Competencies). For the Individualized Competencies, there are already developed 32 performance tests.

Publisher/Producer: The RLS EHSD Program staff have developed all materials. To the best of our knowledge, only the two reports are ready for dissemination.

Target Group: The EHSD program is, theoretically, available to anyone without a high school diploma who is at least 18 years old, who lives in Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, or Oswego Counties, and is interested in earning a high school diploma for any reason.

By mid-May 1976, there were 97 graduates of the program and 87 current enrollees. Despite the stated requirements, the Project Director indicated that "EHSD is not for everyone"; there were at least two people who were discouraged from enrolling in the program because their skills levels--as measured by the diagnostic battery--were too low. Other adults are encouraged to use the alternative methods for getting a high school diploma; for example, a candidate who has completed most of their traditional high school requirements would be rerouted, either back to regular high school or toward the GED.

A comparison of the background of the first 50 actual candidates with a typical ABE student would be enlightening. EHSD graduates are almost equally divided between males and females, have an average age of 40, two-thirds come from Onondaga County, more than half dropped out of high school in the 9th or 10th grades (32% left high school later), and two-fifths had attempted the GED. Furthermore, all but 5 were employed outside the home, most had very stable job histories, and the yearly income for approximately 42% of the candidates ranged from $8,000 to more than $20,000.

Program Development: By the end of 1972, as an outcome of a study of adult learning, the establishment of the EHSD program was recommended to the New York State Commission of Education.

During April-June 1973 a Design Group, coordinated by RLS, and consisting of persons from business, education, and labor developed the proposal's conceptual guidelines. In particular, this group designed the model, emphasizing the concepts of Generalized and Individualized Competencies.

In October 1973, a task force of 14 people began the process of defining, in behavioral terms, the minimal (generalized) competencies, and accompanying performance indicators. Working in small groups, the task force "identified and selected by consensus 64 competencies" that reflected the skills "adults need to cope with daily living." The original list was refined on the basis of feedback from "persons with small businesses, industry, unions, schools, and social agencies." The process of refinement and development continued, and the third draft of 64 competencies and performance indicators was approved in March 1975.

According to the Project Director, these 64 competencies "match those of Northcutt's--at least on a conceptual level, differing only in semantics." From her point of view, this served as partial validation of the competencies.

The program components were pre-tested using paid subjects (all of whom were high school graduates) during the period August-November 1974. Field testing with candidates began December 1, 1974.

The program became operational in January 1975. From then through November, 137 people entered the program, 61 of whom received their diploma. The first graduation took place on March 11, 1975; the second graduation exercises were held on October 21, 1975; and the third official graduation was on May 26, 1976. At that time, a total of 97 diplomas had been earned.

For the next academic year, the project goals include exploring alternative delivery systems (e.g., having community colleges administer the program on their campuses), answering questions about feasibility, costs, etc., and following up graduates.

Program Implementation: For this section we will not repeat the details describing a candidate's progress through the 8 steps of the model; we will, however, touch on some of the highlights.

After orientation about alternative educational programs, and counseling for candidates, the adult candidate goes through a series of diagnostic testing under the supervision of the Learning Consultant. There are 5 instruments; two, the math and reading diagnostic, are administered to the candidate in the office. The other three--a writing diagnostic, Holland's Self-Directed Search, and a self-assessment checklist--are filled out by the candidate at home. According to the project staff, the diagnostic battery covers--if only on the self-assessment checklist--each and every one of the 64 Generalized Competencies.

After completing the diagnostics, the Learning Consultant gives the candidate a written prescription describing the competencies they must learn. Once the candidate indicates he is ready (has either learned the competencies or demonstrated proficiency on them initially) he enters the assessment phase of Generalized Competencies.

In this phase (Step 3 on the appended model), the candidate must complete 5 tasks, 3 of which are completed at home and spot-checked at the center. The remaining 2 are completed in the center's offices. There is no predetermined sequencing of tasks. According to the project staff, the 64 competencies "are blended into the 5 tasks in a logical, orderly fashion." Each one of the 64 competencies is covered once, in only one of the 5 tasks. In the "Rental of a new residence" task, for example, "22 or 23 competencies are assessed." The project staff indicated that there are "other competencies included in the tasks--e.g., organizational ability, ability to follow directions--but that these are not measured."

When the client is ready, a task booklet is sent to his home, and he is given an appointment, one week from that date, to come to the assessment office. Failure to keep the appointment results in a 2-week penalty, 2 weeks during which the candidate is not permitted to continue. After the penalty period, he must redo the task. (The one-week appointment schedule grew out of RLS' experiences. Prior to the one-week appointment, there was no such schedule and candidates often kept the task for a month or two before returning to the assessment office.)

The Assessor checks the task after it is completed, and mails the candidate a list of competencies passed and failed. Generally, a candidate has the same Assessor throughout, except for the Health task; this is assessed by interview with a public health nurse. (The assessment takes about 45 minutes and includes approximately 100 questions.) The candidate must make up any competency that he did not demonstrate; he does not have to repeat the entire task.

To make up the competency, the candidate gets an "I.O.U" and "an appointment to demonstrate the following competencies, plus any items missed in the spot-check, plus any necessary updated documentation."

At the present time, RLS staff are considering initiating a battery of post-diagnostic testing--to occur after the original diagnosis and before the tasks--to make certain that the candidate had mastered the competencies before trying to apply them in the task situation. This is an outgrowth of the fact that the project was (and is) not concerned with what happens in the learning phase, but is concerned about waste. They, however, are reluctant to add "more testing."[1]

According to the project director, the Individualized Competency Assessment phase can be undertaken concurrently with the assessment of Generalized Competencies--provided the candidate makes a decision about which Individualized Competency to pursue. There are three Individualized Competency areas--Occupational/Vocational; Advanced Academic; and Specialized Competencies Assessment. Most clients opt for the Occupational/Vocational alternative, and about one-half use the employer's testimony route for assessment. The form is standard, and the employer rates general work habits--e.g., absenteeism, as well as on-the-job performance. There has not been an instance of an unsatisfactory rating. The other half have gotten a performance interview, and one or two individuals used licensing to demonstrate competencies. If a performance test does not exist, the staff develops one: an expert in the area is chosen, criteria are designed, and the expert and the assessor conduct the interview. The responsibility of the specialist is to describe the acceptable performance of an entry-level person in that occupation. RLS is considering changing this to describe the acceptable performance of a person with one-year on-the-job experience. It should be noted that there have been occupations that are considered to have too few competencies; one such, that of hospital ward aide, was handled by having the candidate demonstrate competencies beyond the requirements of the job description.

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[1] We suggested that, as a conservation effort, they could eliminate the step of diagnostic testing and have the candidate demonstrate the competencies by task. Then, as is the case now, "failed" competencies could be re-assessed on a competency-by-competency basis.

The performance interview and employer testimony differ in important aspects. According to project staff, a performance interview costs about $15 to develop, but may go up as high as $45-$60; the employer testimony costs nothing. Furthermore, in the interview, general work habits are not assessed, but they are covered in the employer letter. Moreover, to qualify for the employer testimony, a candidate must have either worked full-time for one year or 20 hours a week for 2 years; the candidate need not have any work history to take the performance interview.

Program Sites and Staffing: The EHSD program operates out of the RLS office in Syracuse and from a satellite center in Cortland; the satellite center is in a YMCA and is not open full-time.

Attached to the Syracuse RLS site there are 19 part-time Learning Consultants (counselors) who work with EHSD candidates and other RLS clients. They are decentralized, working out of their homes. They are paid on an hourly rate of $5.50/hour from the Carnegie grant funds, for about 12 hours a week. Cortland has its own consultants. Counseling time per student varies from about 10-25 hours, depending on how much "teaching or tutoring the counselor does."

Syracuse has three part-time Learning Assessors plus the public health nurse; Cortland has only one assessor who is a public health nurse. The public health nurse is paid $5.00/hour from project funds. All assessors are part-time, working on an appointment basis; the RLS assessors are considered part of the project development staff. Assessors can each work up to 20 hours a week.

According to the project director, assessors must be "familiar with the community," and need to be good listeners, accurate recorders, and fair evaluators.

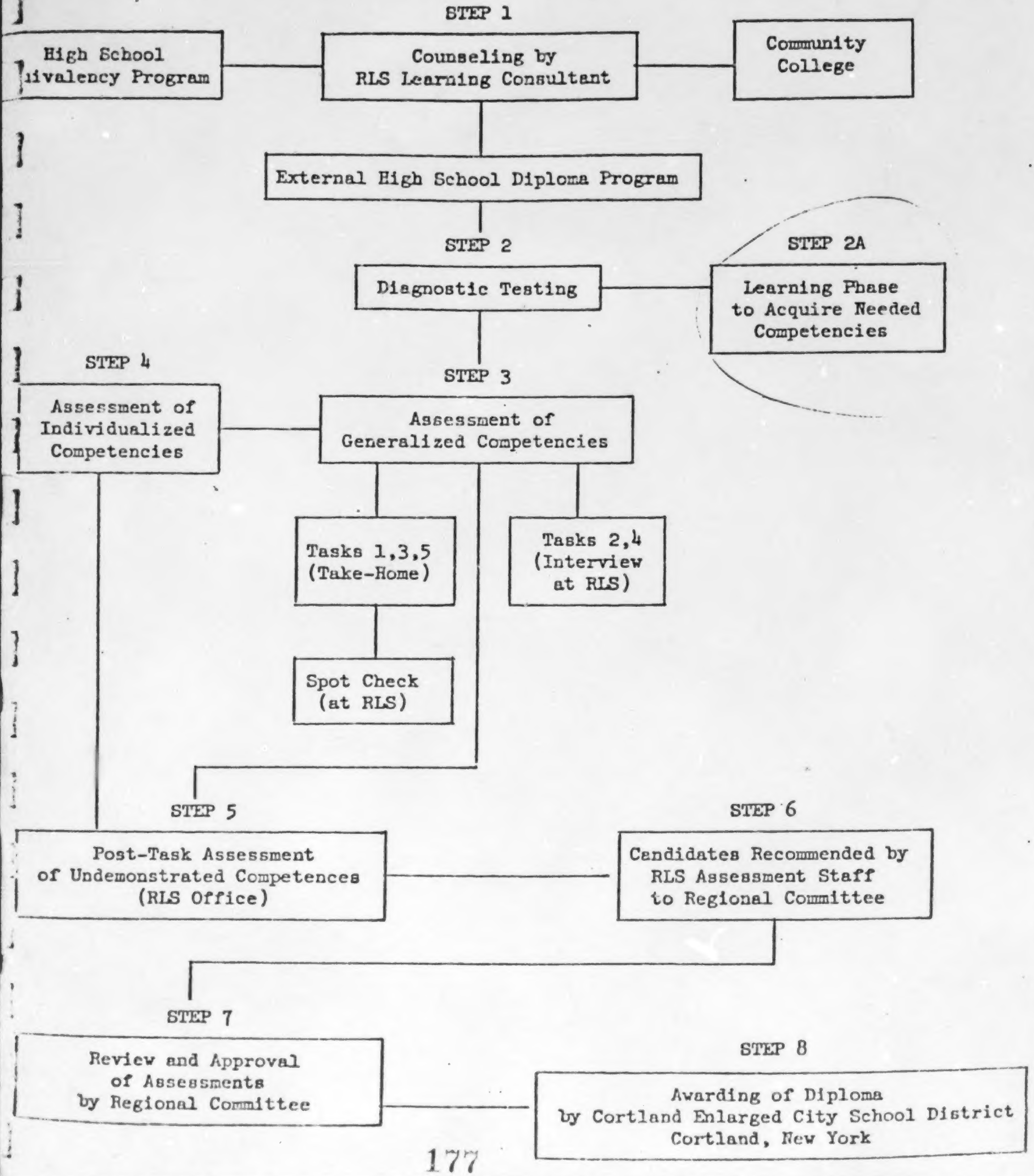
Evaluation: RLS EHSD staff has been monitoring its procedures and outcomes since the initiation of the project. They have data describing such things as the demographic background of participants, and the paths they followed to obtain the high school diploma. The staff is concerned about generating information on program costs, time spent in the program, and followup of successful candidates. They are also making in effort to describe reasons for dropping out, etc.

On the other hand, as program implementers, they are not as concerned with specifying actual admission requirements, nor with reviewing their 64 competencies and performance indicators. The staff is extremely interested and excited about what they are doing and are totally committed to the concept of rewarding adults for competence.

Comments: In our opinion, a number of research questions still need to be answered before widespread replication of the assessment model. These questions are not addressed to issues of feasibility and cost, but reflect our concern with the underlying rationale of using a high school diploma to credential adults who are being asked to demonstrate a set of 64 competencies whose relationship to the high school curriculum is unknown.

RLS staff feels that since there exist no comprehensive, and no comprehensible, set of high school requirements, they should not be overly concerned with how their requirements match up. That is, they seem to feel that since the high school diploma is the "coin of the realm," and since it "has no meaning anyway," it is appropriate to use it to reward competency. In our opinion, this begs the issue, especially in light of the project staff's opinion that their "competencies are not entirely satisfactory." Some additional effort might be given to perfecting the competencies so that they are more adequate and more appropriate as criteria for high school credentialling. That is, since this new assessment model might be useful with any set of competencies, we think the competencies chosen should more closely resemble those reflecting high school requirements.

ORGANIZATION OF ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE EXTERNAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM


STEP 1
High School
ivalency Program
Counseling by
RLS Learning Consultant
Community
College
External High School Diploma Program
STEP 2
Diagnostic Testing
STEP 2A
Learning Phase
to Acquire Needed
Competencies
STEP 4
Assessment of
Individualized
Competencies
STEP 3
Assessment of
Generalized Competencies
Tasks 1,3,5
(Take-Home)
Tasks 2,4
(Interview
at RLS)
Spot Check
(at RLS)
STEP 5
Post-Task Assessment
of Undemonstrated Competences
(RLS Office)
STEP 6
Candidates Recommended by
RLS Assessment Staff
to Regional Committee
STEP 7
Review and Approval
of Assessments
by Regional Committee
STEP 8
Awarding of Diploma
by Cortland Enlarged City School District
Cortland, New York